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Section Two, Arts

THE INDEPENDENT

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40P (OR 45P)



WEATHER Warm with showers

Black South African breaks through, but Britain trails behind



Golden moment: Josia Thugwane celebrating as he approaches the finishing line in the marathon yesterday, to become the first black South African to win an Olympic gold medal

Photograph: AP/Doug Mills

JOJO MOYES and
MIKE ROWBOTTOM
Atlanta

From today, Britain has a little more in common with Hong Kong, Finland and Jamaica. It has joined these countries in having harvested one gold medal apiece from the Atlanta games. Now, as the 1996 Olympics draw to a close, questions are being raised over Britain's poor performance. Is the country that pro-

duced Steve Ovett, Sebastian Coe and Daley Thompson, now destined to lurk at the bottom of the medals tables? Or will last month's sporting humiliation prove a catalyst for a sporting revolution?

In the gold medal tables, Britain yesterday trailed behind Kazakhstan, Denmark and Poland - the worst result since 1976. Thirty countries took home more gold medals than Britain, while France and Italy boasted 15 and 12 respectively.

As the inquests began, Malcolm Arnold, Britain's coaching chief, yesterday initially blamed the British press for lowering the morale of the national teams. But he and other British Olympic officials pin the blame more squarely on a lack of resources. "Our annual budget for coaching and development is equivalent to what a second-division football manager might spend on a third-rate striker," he said in Atlanta. "Taking sport seriously means re-

sources and spending substantial amounts of money." The British Athletic Federation is trying to get help from the National Lottery, but is still waiting to hear if its £9.6m bid has been successful. The bid involves a structured plan up to 2001 when Britain may stage the world athletics championships, and involves training grants and back-up services for elite athletes.

Mike Whittingham, who put together the plan as a consultant for

the Federation, described the current situation as "a political nightmare." With the structure of the proposed British Academy for Sport still under discussion, there is uncertainty about whether applications will be considered from federations, or even individual competitors, once the emphasis for Lottery funding shifts from capital projects to providing revenue. Whittingham, who coached Britain's double-silver medalist Roger Black, believes a central

British Academy of Sport will also take it hard to cater for the needs of all Britain's elite performers. "You could be talking about 6,000 athletes. The academy... will have to rely on the governing bodies."

In an interview yesterday with *The Independent*, Craig Reedie, chairman of the British Olympic Association, described the athletes as "victims of our system".

He said: "We'll have to convince the paymasters of British sport the

rest of the world takes sport more seriously than we do." Britain's poor performance has become the focus of a political row. Just days after the Prime Minister launched the annual £300m Raising the Game programme, an initiative to improve Britain's chances of sporting success, Labour seized on reports that the Government might withdraw funds from programmes which prepare people for leisure-time occupations.

- Reedie interview, Sports Section

New examination system set to boost A-level pass rate

FRAN ABRAMS
Education Correspondent

The A-level pass rate will rise again this year because of changes that allow students to spread revision throughout their courses rather than having to do it all at the end, examination boards predict.

The new "modular" A-levels, which were taken by up to 50,000 students this year, have raised motivation and have allowed students to drop out early if they are unlikely to pass, the boards say. Under this system, candidates who fail can retake as many times as they like.

Critics of the system, who want 100 per cent of A-level marks to be gained through a final exam, say it will contribute to "grade inflation" by making it easier for candidates to pass.

However, under plans to be announced later this week, can-

didates may need more than good A-level grades to obtain a place at university.

The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service, working with government curriculum advisers, wants candidates to be tested on numeracy and literacy. It also wants to find a way of measuring self-motivation, team-working and communication skills.

The move reflects complaints from universities and employers that the brightest sometimes lack the basic skills to make the most of college education, or fit into the workplace.

Tony Higgins, UCAS chief executive, said: "By the end of the century, it could be that universities will not look at students who do not have the appropriate key skills qualifications."

The plans tie in with Sir Ron Dearing's proposed reforms of post-16 qualifications, encour-

Your guide to course vacancies

The Independent will again be the only paper publishing all the official course vacancies throughout clearing. Order your Monday 19 August paper, when the first lists appear.

aging greater parity between academic and vocational courses. But it has not been decided how "key skills" would be fit into the new system. "They could be incorporated into the curriculum and measured as part of existing exams or there could be separate tests," Mr Higgins said. Sir Ron has proposed a single exam in key skills at AS-level - half an A-level.

By the end of the century, scores in these "key skills" and

other achievements would be held on an electronic database. "If we are seriously looking at the development of lifelong learning and the accumulation of credits for learning experiences, a national database could contain profiles which would be most useful to employers," said Mr Higgins.

The plans might help to defuse the annual controversy over whether A-levels are getting easier, because the exam would not be the only criterion for getting a college place.

Exam boards say the modular A-level pupils may get higher grades because instead of taking a two-year course and then sitting exams at the end, candidates take written tests as they go along. The final exam accounts for only 30 per cent of the marks while coursework takes up a maximum of 20 per cent and the interim tests 50 per

cent or more.

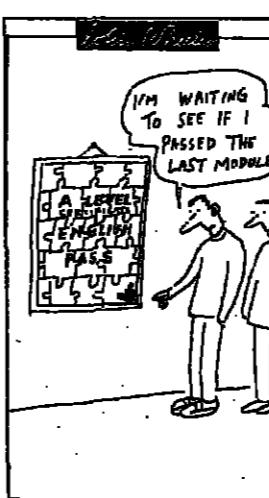
The new-style exams, which are marked by exam boards, have been introduced by ministers and taken by about a quarter of candidates doing maths, English or science subjects this year.

With more than 700,000 candidates taking A-levels, any rise in the pass rate, which is already going up by about 1 per cent each year, is likely to be slight.

However, examinations officials say that while there are fewer high grades under the new system, there are fewer failures as well. Figures compiled by the University of Cambridge Board, which did some modular courses last year, have confirmed this.

■ A North-South divide still exists in staying-on rates for 16-year-olds, the Labour Party said last night. While six out of 10 pupils in the North stay on at school, 78 per cent do so in

the South-east. Bryan Davies, a Labour education spokesman, said the disparity could undermine efforts to develop a high-skil, high-tech economy.



QUICKLY

Deadline for Mostar

European leaders today face one of their toughest choices yet in former Yugoslavia: either to carry out a threat to end EU administration of the divided town of Mostar, or to back down and open the way to partition.

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Aborted twin fears

A gynaecologist's decision to abort one of a pair of healthy twins was "different to any other abortion", doctors said yesterday. But pro-life organisations warned of the effect on the surviving twin.

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ROUND THE ISLAND



ON THE ROCKS

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EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL	11-31 August
SILK CUT DERBY, RICCASTAD	15-18 August
GATCHELL PARK HORSE TRIALS	31 August-1 September
DUNHILL BETTER MINTERS, COLLINGTRIE	3-9 September
THE ROYAL HIGHLAND GAMES OF BRAEMAR	7 September
ST LEGER STAKES, DONCASTER	14 September
LAST NIGHT OF THE PRINCE ROYAL ALBERT HALL	14 September
LA FESTIVAL AUX QUAT' SAUMONS, GREAT MILTON	1-5 October

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CHAMPAGNE OF THE SEASON

NHS 'wasting millions on failed computer projects'

NICHOLAS TIMMINS
Public Policy Editor

The National Audit Office has launched a preliminary investigation into allegations that millions of pounds of NHS cash have been wasted on large-scale computer projects which have failed to deliver, are late and in some cases may never work properly at all.

The move follows the widespread leaking of confidential documents from the NHS Executive, mounting criticism from health authority and NHS Trust chief executives of the executive's Information Management Group which runs the projects, and an assessment

yesterday by the British Medical Association that its operation seems to be "rotten at the core". A BMA spokesman said: "Things do seem to be going horribly wrong."

One of the failures is the £100m Hospital Information Support System (HIS) which was launched without a full business case appraisal in 1988. It has been subject to delay and disappointing performance. Documents leaked to Radio 4's *The World This Weekend* and seen by *The Independent* show that a critical National Audit Office report on the scheme published earlier this year was watered down. Its first draft contained much stronger criticism of the Executive and its Information Management Group for its oversight of the project.

Another system, the Read codes, a system for allocating a computer code to patients' medical conditions, has been plagued by implementation problems. Questions have been

raised about the financial arrangement under which their GP inventor, Dr James Read, sold the idea to the NHS and then continued to work on it on a cost plus 30 per cent basis while charging NHS bodies a licence fee to use it. A senior Welsh Office official has warned the system is "in danger of collapse".

More than £130,000 is being spent to correct the NHS numbers project, aimed at providing a unique computerised 10-digit number for all patients. It issued the same number to more than 7,500 newborn babies, generating about 50 such errors a week earlier this year.

Another scheme, Memphis,

aimed at creating a computer network for senior NHS managers, was approved without an option appraisal, according to a senior health department economist who was asked to comment on it overnight when consultants were due to start work on it three days later. He

condemned the £1m scheme as "unacceptable", according to a leaked memo, protesting that the preferred solution was "the only one on offer". The papers also suggest contracts may have been breached Civil Service guidelines and EU directives. Copies of slides from an internal assessment by the IMG last year of progress since 1992 suggest that of 18 objectives set then, only 4 had been achieved.

Chris Smith, Labour's new health spokesman, yesterday called for Stephen Dorrell, the Secretary of State for Health, to intervene. The Department's only comment came yesterday from the NHS executive, which said the projects involved integration of more than £2bn of IT systems which the NHS has successfully installed over the past decade. That programme was "well advanced" and "problems are few", despite the initiative requiring "managerial and technical change on a considerable scale."

"It gives you a guided tour in

Virtual welcome for firm's recruits

CHARLES ARTHUR
Science Editor

After the paperless office and the golden hello, a firm of accountants has dreamed up the next stage in technology: the virtual welcome.

New recruits to Morton Thornton, based in St Albans, Hertfordshire, will be shown around the three-floor building without leaving their desks - and without taking up the valuable, fee-paying time of other members of staff.

The new virtual reality tour, which will replace the day-long induction programme that the firm used to offer to its recruits, will also include a guide to the town's cathedral, and pubs.

"It gives you a guided tour in which you can start outside the front door of the practice and 'walk' through the front door and all over the building," said Christopher Lowe, a partner in the 70-strong firm.

The guided tour takes the form of movies in which the user can control the speed and di-

rection of travel. Those pictures were collected from digitised camera and video films made on the premises.

But the program's usefulness extends much further. "It can show you pictures of key people in the organisation, and explain procedures such as how to handle clients on the phone, or how to claim expenses."

The pressure for replacing the personal touch with the personal computer did not come from previous recruits, Mr Lowe said. Instead, it was the drive for profitability.

"We were looking at cost structures and training is expensive, costing up to £70 per hour," he said. "We wanted to get the best value from it. There is a cost saving in doing it this way."

Rather than tying up a senior partner - who might have to use valuable chargeable time on telling a recruit where the photocopier is - the CD-ROM based product will be able to point the way and save the firm thousands of pounds annually.

news

Portillo backs US in terror war

Michael Portillo, the Secretary of State for Defence, yesterday signalled that Britain would support US strikes against terrorist training camps in the Middle East if there is clear evidence that they are linked to recent terrorist attacks on American bases.

There was growing speculation in Washington that Iran sponsored the terrorists who were responsible for the bombing of the US base in Saudi Arabia. And there was further evidence that TWA Flight 800 was brought down by a bomb.

William Perry, the US Defense Secretary, said "a flood of intelligence" suggested another attack on US forces in Saudi Arabia was imminent.

"We are preparing for a

terrorist attack," he said. "We see our military forces under terrorist threat."

British bases in the Middle East have been put on alert and security has been stepped up. Mr Perry, who briefed Mr Portillo on Friday, during a stop-over from Saudi Arabia, played down speculation of an early US attack in the Middle East, but there were weekend reports that the CIA has identified 11 terrorist training camps in Iran, which sent the bombers that attacked American military targets in Saudi Arabia last November and in June.

As part of the flight deck of TWA Flight 800 was recovered, it was also reported that pieces of china had been found embedded in the roof of the first-class cabin, raising speculation that a bomb could have exploded in the galley or in panelling in the lavatory.

Mr Portillo underlined on GMTV the seriousness of the threat he believes the West is facing.

This has to be a global struggle in which the allies stand shoulder-to-shoulder determined to beat terrorism," Mr Portillo said. "We need to show the presence of the West defending Kuwait, defending Saudi Arabia, determined to resist aggression ... these terrorists,

whoever they are, are trying to drive out the Western powers and make that region insecure, cut off oil to the West, unleash extremism of one sort or another, therefore we need to be extremely robust."

He said Mr Perry had "voiced a suspicion that this isn't just a domestic Saudi group that's involved. There may be connections elsewhere. Now we also insist on clear evidence of that."

Mr Perry, who returned last week from Saudi Arabia, said Saudi and FBI investigators working jointly to determine who planted the bomb had not yet found any solid leads. "I learned nothing new about who was responsible for the bombing," he said.

But he did reiterate his belief that either a foreign government or forces working outside Saudi Arabia had collaborated in the bombing.

"Because of the complex nature of the attack I believe that in and of itself provides evidence of outside support," he said. "It was a military detonator and a military explosive."

Mr Perry also noted that "Iran and Iraq are two countries that have regularly stated that they do not want our forces" in Saudi Arabia.

But Britain has warned the

US against a commando raid to snatch Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb leader wanted for war crimes. The US was reported to be drawing up plans for a strike by airborne special forces against Mr Karadzic, at his base in Pale.

But Mr Portillo cautioned against such a move, saying British, French and American lives might be sacrificed in this kind of kidnapping raid.

"Remember, this is not a free option. If Karadzic were to be snatched, my judgement is we would put at risk, we might sacrifice, American, British, French lives."

"The question that I am responsible for asking is, how many British lives is that worth?"

Mostar dilemma, page 8

SIGNIFICANT SHORTS

The Prime Minister was "pretty upset" with the six Tory MPs who voted against a ban on handguns, senior Government sources said last night. John Major and Michael Forsyth, the Secretary of State for Scotland, are backing the need for legislation, which they expect to be called for by Lord Cullen in his report on the Dunblane massacre. Mr Forsyth has already circulated a Cabinet paper on proposals for legislation to ban the private ownership of hand guns in anticipation of the Cullen report.

The Prime Minister and Michael Forsyth are both emotionally committed to action. The Prime Minister was pretty upset with the Tory MPs, the source said. Mr Major, currently on a fortnight's holiday in the South of France, has asked for Lord Cullen to report by the end of September to enable legislation to be introduced in the autumn. Colin Brown

Long waits on hospital trolleys could be ended and a repeat of last winter's scandal avoided by the adoption of a six-point plan unveiled yesterday by nurses, who urge hospitals to plan ahead for increases in emergencies during the winter months and appoint a bed manager to co-ordinate admissions.

The blueprint followed a survey showing almost half of casualty departments had patients on trolleys overnight. The study of 75 A&E units carried out by the Royal College of Nursing last winter showed the crisis was particularly severe in London, where 70 per cent had patients stuck on trolleys overnight and average waiting time was seven and a half hours. Under the Patients' Charter no one should spend more than two hours waiting on a trolley.

Two children and two adults were injured after a car veered off a seaside promenade and crashed on to a beach at Galley Hill, Bexhill in East Sussex, yesterday. A police spokesman said the car shot forward along a grass verge, struck a shelter on De La Warr Parade before veering across the promenade. It collided with iron railings along the sea front and fell 15 feet down on to the shingle beach, landing on its roof near where the two children were playing.

The four were taken to Conquest Hospital in Hastings. Police said the driver of the car and his female passenger sustained serious injuries and were being detained in hospital overnight. The children received only minor injuries after being hit by flying debris and were unlikely to be kept in hospital. The cause of the accident is not yet known. Matthew Brace

A crisis meeting to break the deadlock over the Apprentice Boys' controversial march in Londonderry next Saturday is to be held today. The Government is anxious to avoid a repeat of the widespread violence which was sparked by last month's Drumcree stand-off. Nationalists from the Bogside area, who oppose the parade route along the city's ancient walls, have set Wednesday as a deadline for agreement. The march through Londonderry by 10,000 Apprentice Boys and 180 bands would follow several earlier parades through potential flashpoint areas.

Goeff Hamilton, presenter of Gardeners' World on BBC2, died suddenly yesterday while taking part in a charity cycle ride. Mr Hamilton, 59, who had presented the show since 1979, fell from his bicycle near Merthyr Tydfil, Mid Glamorgan. He had suffered a heart attack a year ago. Mr Hamilton, who trained at Writtle College of Agriculture in Essex, lived with his second wife, Lynda, in Barnsdale, Rutland, where the family also runs a garden centre and nursery.

A 14-year-old stowaway was on her way home yesterday after travelling on a ferry to France without a ticket or passport. Mary Syddall, of Braintree, Essex, said Brittany Ferries would have to "answer some questions" after her daughter, Clair, boarded a ferry going from Portsmouth to St Malo. Essex Police put out an appeal after Clair, a diabetic, went missing from home on Wednesday and ports were alerted. She arrived in St Malo early yesterday and was waiting for a ferry to Portsmouth, where her parents were waiting. Brittany Ferries has promised an investigation.

A 24-year-old woman died of head injuries when she fell while potholing in North Yorkshire, police said. Christine Bleakley, of Irvinestown, Co Fermanagh in Northern Ireland, was climbing in Quaking Pot at Ingleborough, near Settle, on Saturday when the accident happened.

Last Saturday's £9.7m National Lottery jackpot will be shared by four tickets. The winning numbers were 13, 17, 26, 28, 31, 36, and the bonus was 44.

THE INDEPENDENT ABROAD

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A festival that began as a way to raise funds for a new village hall now attracts 17,000 fans

Fairport feelgood factor

MATTHEW BRACE

Not all summer rock festivals are the bane of villagers' lives. In fact, for one sleepy village near Banbury in north Oxfordshire, their annual outdoor music bash is the highlight of the year.

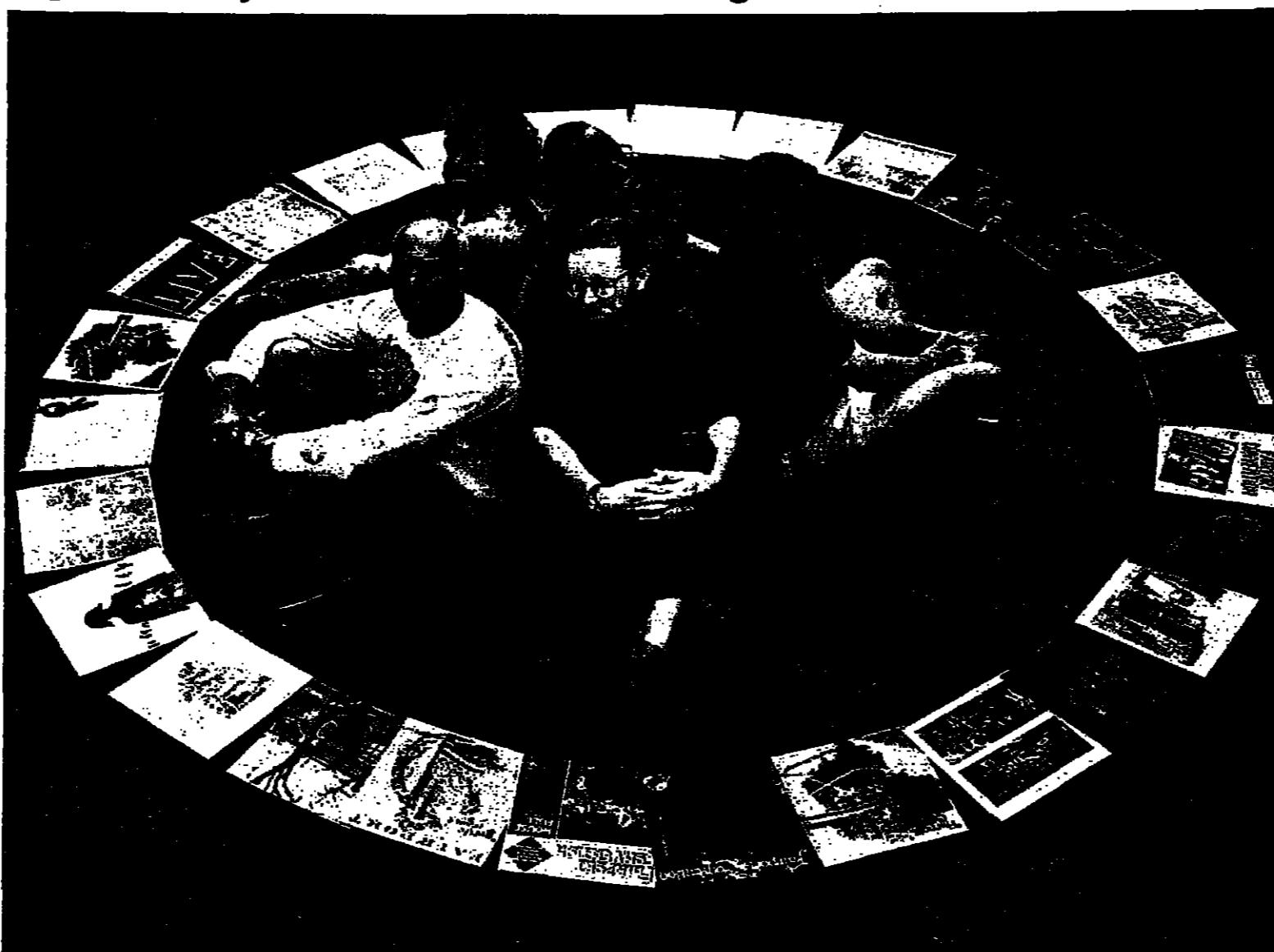
The Cropredy festival, dreamed up 20 years ago this week, has spawned a large cottage industry without which the village would be the poorer.

The event, organised by and starring the legendary folk rock band Fairport Convention, began life in the parched summer of 1976 as a sing-along to raise money for a new village hall.

Now it attracts 17,000 revellers from all over Europe, a congenial mix of ageing hippies, bikers and families that descends on the tiny village (population 724) each August, camping out in the fields where the Battle of Cropredy Bridge was fought in 1644 during the Civil War.

While the summer music festivals at Glastonbury, Reading and Stratford-upon-Avon have been known to get themselves bad names by upsetting police and locals in recent years, the "Fairports" and their followers have been charming the villagers of Cropredy.

The local Ladies Circle are up at dawn each day during the event cooking fried breakfasts on vast barbecues in nearby farmyards for hungover hippies. The local Scouts perform morning litter sweeps, carefully picking up crushed beer cans and cigarette ends from between clumps of sleeping Hell's Angels. The village's two pubs and one corner shop have their two most fruitful days of the



Life's work: Fairport Convention relax at Woodworm Studios, encircled by their albums, after rehearsals for the Cropredy Festival. Photograph: John Potter

year. And the vicar puts on a special Festival Service for Christian bikers on the Sunday morning. "The church is always full," he insists.

In the event's 20-year history there has been little violence. There was only a handful of arrests last year and the drug squad does not even bother to turn up any more.

Ticket touts are unheard of at Cropredy, despite the fact that many festival-goers turn up

on the Friday afternoon and buy on their weekend passes on the gate.

Fairport Convention theorise why the festival is so good-natured. Is it the music? Oasis and the Sex Pistols are unlikely to appear on the bill, but last year the festival had its fair share of screaming guitars and head-banging from some of the

support acts. The clientele perhaps? Cropredy does attract an older age group (mainly in their 30s and 40s), but there is never a shortage of lads in rugby shirts, swaying on cider.

"It's the whole atmosphere," says Dave Pegg, Fairport's bass player, "the vibe if you like. People know Cropredy is a peaceful place, a peaceful

festival. Violence or bad behaviour is just not on, so nobody does it. It's always been like that. Wonderful really, and unique."

"At what other festival can you leave your tent open and not have anything nicked?"

Cropredy starts on Friday, 9 August. Tickets available on the gate.

Government denies BSE-milk tests

CHARLES ARTHUR

Science Editor

The government denied yesterday that it is doing research into the possibility that BSE, or mad-cow disease, might be passed on in milk. The claim followed the disclosure last week that BSE can be passed from mother to calf, and MAFF spokesman said: "The advisory committee SEAC reiterated last week that it is satisfied with the precautions presently taken with milk, and MAFF is in agreement with that." SEAC had not asked for any further research into milk, he said.

SEAC forced the Government to announce in March that a dozen recent cases of the Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD) brain disorder could have been caused by exposure to the BSE agent. But cows' milk has never been implicated.

examined whether BSE might be transmitted by milk: the result suggested it could not.

Media reports suggested yesterday that the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) is carrying out experiments to test whether milk can carry the BSE agent. A MAFF spokesman said: "The advisory committee SEAC reiterated last week that it is satisfied with the precautions presently taken with milk, and MAFF is in agreement with that." SEAC had not asked for any further research into milk, he said.

SEAC forced the Government to announce in March that a dozen recent cases of the Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD) brain disorder could have been caused by exposure to the BSE agent. But cows' milk has never been implicated.

Worries have focused instead on cattle brains, spinal cords and various organs which have repeatedly been shown to be highly infective to other cattle. Some monkeys have also developed the disease after eating BSE-infected material.

Government documents suggest MAFF has never funded any studies to investigate whether milk could transmit BSE to calves. "Observations in the field support the hypothesis that it cannot," said the spokesman. In the recent experiment which showed vertical transmission, many of the calves that developed BSE and had BSE-infected mothers never had any of their mother's milk.

Since BSE was identified in 1986, the only published study into the infectivity of milk was carried out by the Institute of Animal Health in Edinburgh.

In the scheme just a month after axing a benefit helpline, put there to ensure that those entitled to help received it.

Archie Kirkwood, the Liberal Democrats social security spokesman, said: "The balance of the Government's benefit strategy is sadly awry. Fraud detection is taking far too high a degree of priority over entitlement to benefit." Fraud had to be tackled, but better administrative systems were preferable to cheaters, he added.

Labour said it would support any move to cut down on the present "massive" level of social security fraud. But it was "double standards" to cut the one line

while introducing the other. "We need fairness in the system," Henry McLeish, the party's social security spokesman, said.

Oliver Heald, the Social Security minister, claimed savings from fraud would go to those in need and the hotline would be self-financing. "The savings from the pilot schemes were remarkable," he said. "Together with the 21 'spotlight' campaigns - where individual areas are targeted for benefit fraud - £15m had been saved."

"We've had an overwhelming response from genuine benefit claimants who feel very strongly that other people are ripping the system off," he said.

Cheatlines to trap benefit fraudsters

NICHOLAS TIMMINS

Public Policy Editor

The Government will today launch a telephone hotline inviting the public to shop benefit swindlers under the slogan "Know of a benefit rip-off? Give us a telephone tip-off".

The campaign, to be backed by a £500,000 press and poster advertising campaign, comes after the success of pilot, localised, "shop a cheat" hotlines which are claimed to have saved more than £1m.

Peter Lilley, the Secretary of State for Social Security, found himself accused of double standards by launching

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Thin line guards the freedom to roam

Commerce and weakening ideals are threatening the National Parks, writes Stephen Goodwin

More than 100 million visits are made to National Parks in England and Wales each year. Most of the millions will not be stretching for hand-holds at the top of Troutdale Pinnacle, a classic Lake District rock-climb, or even scrambling round the Snowdon Horseshoe. They will be clustered around the ice-cream vans by the caves at Castleton in the Peak District, or perhaps spilling from their cars on Dartmoor mimicking the Hound of the Baskervilles.

But whatever their recreational bent – day-tripping, walking, climbing, cycling or water-sports – visitors pour into the parks because these places are special. William Wordsworth recognised it 186 years ago when he described the Lake District as “a sort of national property, in which every man has a right and interest, who has an eye to perceive and a heart to enjoy”.

Vision became reality with the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act. Within a decade, the finest 10 per cent of the landscape of England and Wales was granted special protection.

But are we living up to the ideals not just of Wordsworth, but of those who fought for the parks as an integral part of the post-war settlement? The voluntary bodies who watch over the countryside fear a weakening of the “thin green line” in the face of commercial pressures, budget cuts and government indifference. Today, quarrying, roads, tank and artillery ranges, power stations and power boats, are all jostling for space in the parks.

Arabella Nobbs, director of the Council for National Parks, and, to some, a worrying trend.

which celebrates its 60th anniversary this year, is worried about protection. “Radical change will be needed to enable the new authorities to start living up to the expectations of the parks’ founders. Ministers will have to learn to say ‘no’ to some of the big threats that loom.”

The campaign for parks began in earnest in the 1930s with working-class ramblers from Manchester and Sheffield escaping the mills and steelworks to walk the Pennine moors at weekends, and higher-minded, wealthier worthies, like the Trevelyan family, seeing the hills as a place of spiritual regeneration.

The first National Park was designated in the Peak District in 1951, closely followed by the Lakes. By 1957 there were 10. The Norfolk and Suffolk Broads became parks in 1989. Most parks have to get by on the amount of money that might be allotted to a medium-sized comprehensive school, and Government support this year for the five parks in England is down to £21m.

John Tophill, National Park Office for the Lake District, has seen his grant cut by 5.6 per cent to £3.7m this year. He predicts “difficult times” for all the parks. A big worry is the cost of public inquiries – the Lakes’ attempt to rid Windermere of power-boats has cost about £500,000 and may yet fail.

All the parks now look to the EC, the National Lottery, water companies and other sponsors for funds. In the Peak District rangers’ Land Rovers carry the logo of Severn Trent – the outcome of a partnership deal, and, to some, a worrying trend.



Public highways: Enjoying the hard-won right to take the air on the hills, visitors climb the path to Stickle Tarn, Langdale, in Cumbria’s National Park

Photographs: Tom Pilston

Peace amid the madding crowds

Follow the line of Nether Beck as it tumbles from Cumbria’s western fells towards Wastwater and it is difficult not to think that stories of hordes of visitors loving the National Parks to death might be overblown.

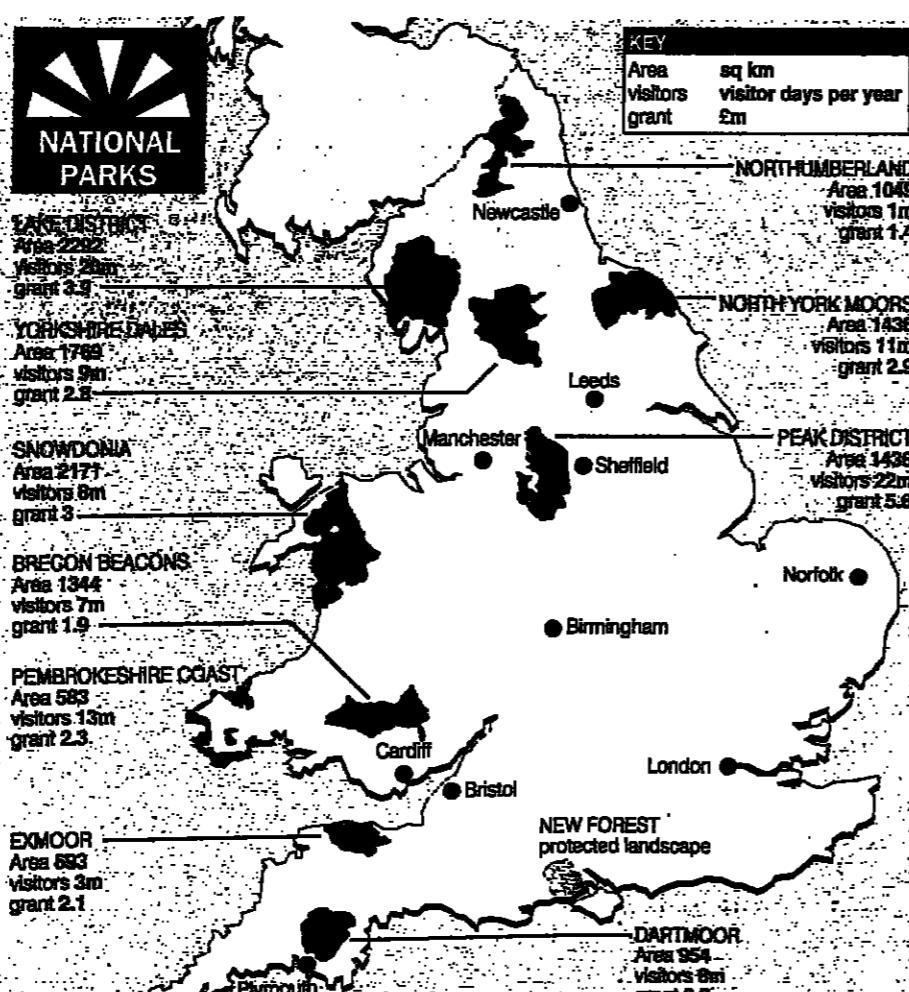
The beck-side path is plain enough on the map as a right of way. On the ground, as it climbs past the old hollies and rowans that overhang the falls and hidden swimming holes, it is less obvious.

Not many boots pass this way. Only if you follow the line on to the Mosedale horseshoe and the bulk of Pillar, one of Lakeland’s highest peaks, is there a certainty of encountering other groups of walkers.

Yet the Lake District National Park reckons it gets 20 million day visits a year and the Peak District has just come up with a boggling figure of up to 31 million. Only the Mount Fuji park in Japan gets more.

Four out of five visitors are apparently happy to admire the parks from their cars or take a walk of no more than two miles. If, as the original campaigners believed, the parks are places where the urban masses should be able to breathe cleaner air and refresh the spirit, then the 100 million visits made each year should be a mark of success.

That was certainly the relaxed view of the late Tom Stephenson, father of the Pennine Way, even when confronted with the boot-made scars across peat moors at the start of his trail. But to local people, unless they are in the tourist trade, visitors are often an irritant, blocking narrow lanes with cars, frightening



the sheep with their dogs, and bringing their noisy children into the pub for bar meals.

Of course, the visitors would be there whether Whitehall had designated the area a Na-

tional Park or not. The status actually means more money and co-ordination in managing the numbers. For farmers, who often regard ramblers as a pain, there is help with dry-stone

walling and a plethora of grants. In Swaledale and Arkengarthdale, North Yorkshire, more than 200 barns and stone walls have been repaired, the value of the work exceeding £1m.

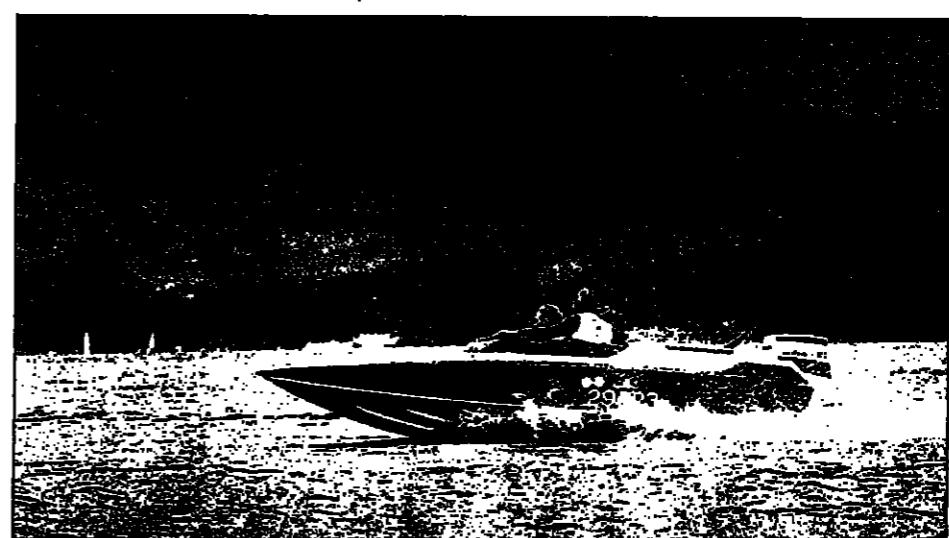
That is what the National Park does for the local economy.

Tourism earns £75m a year for the Peak District economy. There is some resentment of trippers, but in the down-to-earth way of Derbyshire folk, it is not strongly felt. Contrast the sense of hostility to outsiders in the Welsh parks – even while taking their money – and the touch of superiority in the Lakes, a place for “persons of pure taste”, according to Wordsworth.

The Peak is also way ahead in traffic management. It is a case of “needs must” with about 17 million people living within an hour or so’s drive. Park-and-ride schemes operate in the Goyt and Upper Derwent valleys and at the Roaches, a gritstone outcrop where climbers’ cars will clog the verge. The Peak supports bus and train services to the tune of £150,000 a year.

“We have to persuade visitors that bringing their cars in does not bring problems,” says Martin Doughty, the Peak park authority chairman. But it has to be done on a shoestring. Government funding for the Peak is down by 10 per cent to £5.2m for this year. “Providing constructive measures to cope with the ever-increasing tide of visitors is more and more difficult,” Mr Doughty warns.

Other parks are also promoting public transport. But the Lake District provoked cries of outrage from tourism and business lobbies when it suggested restricting traffic up some valleys. Much back-pedalling followed and the initiative is likely to be limited to traffic calming and the promotion of public transport and cycling.



Making waves: 7,000 power boats register for Windermere each year

Lakes fight for a quiet corner

When the Government turned its back on the recommendation of its own countryside advisers that the peace of National Parks would be better protected if recreation was restricted to “quiet” enjoyment, the biggest cheer was from power boat sailors, motorbike trail riders and those who like to pit their 4x4 vehicles against the mud and roots of “green roads”.

As Ian Mercer, secretary general of the Association of National Parks, observed: “No one is more truculent than the Briton at leisure.” Quiet enjoyment was one of the principles at the heart of the Countryside Commission’s *Fit for the Future* parks review of 1991, but ministers were swayed by a powerful motoring lobby, including the RAC.

The Lake District has spent £500,000 of its slender resources trying to get boat

speeds on Lake Windermere limited to 10 mph. The park and the power boaters are now awaiting the outcome of a public inquiry into the proposed speed limit. There is a fear in the conservation camp that the lack of a “quiet enjoyment” rule in the 1995 Environment Act will play a significant part in Secretary of State John Gummer’s decision.

Some 7,000 power boats each year register to go on the lake – the only one in the park where they are permitted. The restriction would sink water skiers, who need a minimum speed of 18 mph, and ban the noisy, but increasingly popular, scooter-like jet skis. Windermere is England’s largest lake, 10.5 miles long, but relatively narrow. On a busy day up to 1,500 craft use it, from 70mph power boats to canoeists.

Tony Hill, the park’s Windermere ranger, says: “We have to decide as a nation what we want from these parks. Do we want somewhere where people can enjoy themselves like a seaside town or do we say we are keeping these as special areas?” Mr Hill wants the latter.

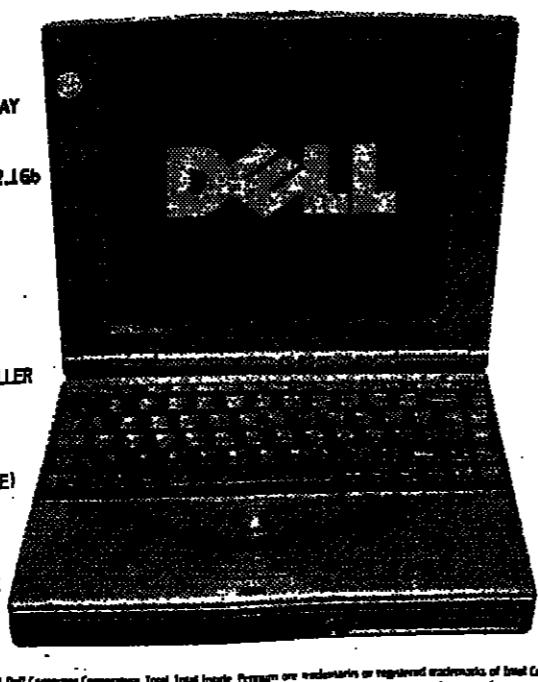
The Lakes has come to an understanding with the all-terrain set – no formal closure moves by the park in exchange for voluntary restraint where tracks are badly eroded. Problems continue on the North York Moors and in the Brecon Beacons, where 4x4s are churning up Sarn Helen Roman road.

Tim Stevens, information officer of the 4x4 and trail riders umbrella body, the Land Access and Recreation Association, argues that a horse clattering over a stony track makes as much noise as his trail bike.

“Democracy isn’t just about majority rules OK,” he says.

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Doctors defend abortion of twin

GLENDY COOPER

A gynaecologist's decision to abort one of a pair of healthy twins was "no different to any other abortion" doctors said.

But anti-abortion organisations warned that the effect on the surviving twin and the mother herself could be "horrifying".

In what is believed to be the first "selective termination" of its kind in Britain Phillip Bennett, professor of obstetrics and gynaecology at Queen Charlotte's Hospital, London has agreed to terminate one foetus because the mother has said she could not cope with two babies.

Selective termination is usually used when *in vitro* fertilisation results in a multiple pregnancy. Doctors can choose to abort one of the foetuses if it shows a sign of abnormality or if a high number of embryos implant in the womb, increasing the risk of complications.

The technique involves piercing the selected foetus with a needle, although this can increase the risk of the others miscarrying. The dead foetus is carried to full term, shrivelling in the womb. In 1994 there were 73 selective terminations, compared with 32 in 1993.

"Killing one healthy twin sounds unethical," Professor Bennett told a Sunday newspaper yesterday. "But my colleague and I concluded this week that it would be better to terminate one pregnancy as soon as possible and leave one alive than to lose two babies."

Dr Vivienne Nathanson, head of ethics for the British Medical Association said the decision was bound to cause "instinctive horror" but could be justified legally on medical grounds because multiple births carry more risks, or social

grounds if the woman could not cope with twins.

"I don't think there's really any difference between performing an abortion to leave no foetus and reducing a twin to a singleton," she said. "It's exactly the same as any other abortion at 16 weeks."

David Paintin, chairman of the Birth Control Trust agreed: "It is a very difficult situation but a termination is the same whether for twins or a single pregnancy. It is only allowed on the grounds listed in the Abortion Act."

He said that if he had been asked he would have carried out the selective termination: "The dilemma is that she says she can cope with one child but not two. If a woman who is 16 weeks pregnant feels so strongly that she cannot cope one of the options must be selective reduction."

But a spokesman for the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists said that he thought most gynaecologists would not be prepared to terminate one foetus only.

Wendy Savage, press officer for Doctors for a Woman's Choice on Abortion, warned that aborting one twin could have severe repercussions for both mother and surviving twin: "If this woman came to me and said that she couldn't cope on the grounds of mental health, I would want to involve a psychiatrist or a psychotherapist," she said. "When you have got twins and one of them is aborted, you have the live twin in front of you as a constant reminder."

Professor John Scarisbrick, chairman of Life, an anti-abortion organisation, described it as a "horrifying story": "What will happen if the surviving twin discovers that a brother or sister is missing and that is his or her mother's fault? What will this do for the trust and love in the family?" he said.

REBECCA FOWLER

The final chapter has not even been written, the debts are mounting, previous rejection letters are in the bin – then comes the call from Hollywood. An anointed band of British writers are living happily ever after in a wave of record-breaking deals to buy the rights of their books for film.

This month, John Grisham, the American king of the courtroom drama, is expected to sell his latest novel, *The Runaway Jury*, to Hollywood for an unprecedented \$8m as part of the most lucrative writing career in Hollywood history. But the Brits are hot on his trail with a pile of blockbuster thrillers and romances.

As part of his own bid to become a top player in the film world, Mick Jagger, with a Hollywood studio, has bought the rights to *Enigma*, the wartime spy novel by Robert Harris. Harris is one of the band of top British writers dubbed "storytellers", of works which blur the traditional literary and commercial divide.

Jagger paid £400,000 with Paramount for *Enigma*, which tells the story of the Bletchley wartime intelligence team that cracked Nazi codes. Such was the fervour surrounding film rights for the book, which will be adapted by Tom Stoppard, that Elizabeth Hurley and Hugh Grant also put in a bid for their own film company.

But even with this hand-

some sum, Harris is only on the first rung a golden ladder of record-breaking deals. Hollywood's *Daily Variety* said of Grisham's asking price: "An \$8m pay-day would raise eyebrows, but no studio has yet rejected cutting John Grisham a big cheque."

The first British novelist to break into the multi-million club was Nicholas Evans with *The Horse Whisperer*, the story of a family whose daughter is horribly injured in a riding accident. He sold the novel for more than £2m, when it was half-finished, in a frenzied bidding process led by Robert Redford, who will play the lead.

Caradoc King, Evans' agent, described the hysteria last year: "Once we'd had that first offer

of a million we had Spielberg's office ringing. By Tuesday we were receiving numerous calls from Hollywood producers, but we wanted an outright sell. Anyone who offered \$3m could speak to Nick Evans."

The deal put Evans, a formerly debt-ridden freelance film producer from Stockwell in south London, on a footing with the biggest players, including Michael Crichton who received only half Evans' advance for *Jurassic Park*, and Grisham, who broke records when he received £2.3m for *The Chamber*.

For the studios, Evans' novel had the winning snarl of *The Bridges of Madison County*, a romance written by Robert James Waller, an economics professor, who sold 10m

copies and was adapted for the screen starring Meryl Streep and Clint Eastwood.

The courting of the "storytellers" is in stark contrast to the traditional image of writers in Hollywood, where until recently even the most revered novelists were paid relatively modestly. When Graham Greene wrote *The Third Man*, he was paid £9,000, a generous figure for the time.

The process is not always smooth according to the writer Anna Pasternak, who sold her account of the affair between Princess Diana and Major James Hewitt to an American network for a substantial sum.

Pasternak said: "You start reading the script and you realise they're not making a film of

your book. In the end ... you take the money and run."

The record-breaking deals involved must help to encourage stoicism. Among the "storytellers" who have been wooed by Hollywood is Philip Kerr, from Wimbledon, south-west London, who was paid \$1m for *Gridiron*, the story of a building that takes revenge on its occupants. Earlier this year he was given a reputed £1m advance by Tom Cruise for a 10-page summary of his next book.

Kerr thought of the plot for the idea embodied in *A Five-year Plan*, on a flight to Edinburgh last summer. After signing the deal he said: "I went home and wrote the outline the following weekend. Now I've just got to start writing the book."

Hollywood feeding frenzy hits the book world

STREET AND EASTWOOD IN THE BRIDGES OF MADISON COUNTY BY ROBERT JAMES WALLER (TOP RIGHT). ROBERT HARRIS (CENTRE) AND ANNA PASTERNAK (BELOW) HAVE SOLD FILM RIGHTS TO THEIR OWN NOVELS



Police called to help fashion new look

JOJO MOYES

Britain's police could get a new look after officers have their say on how their "bulky and hot" uniforms could be updated.

As part of a police working group, a questionnaire is being sent to around 12,000 police officers in England and Wales asking whether the traditional

helmet should be kept, as well as what they think about the rest of their uniform.

Metropolitan Police federation branch chairman Mike Bennett said there were some "weird suggestions being put about", including Bermuda shorts in summer. Police in Manchester had already opted for caps rather than helmets, he

said, adding: "There are people who say they don't want the helmet – but the flat cap gives you no protection whatsoever."

Manchester police had also opted for a balaclava instead of the tunic. But Mr Bennett said this was not popular in the Met: "We live in an age of anoraks and I think the anorak meets all the criteria that indi-

viduals want in the modern age." He added that assurances had been given that officers in London would not lose the helmet – one of the capital's most distinctive sights for tourists.

The results of the survey are likely to be published in October and will go to the Association of Chief Police Officers' Uniform Project Group.

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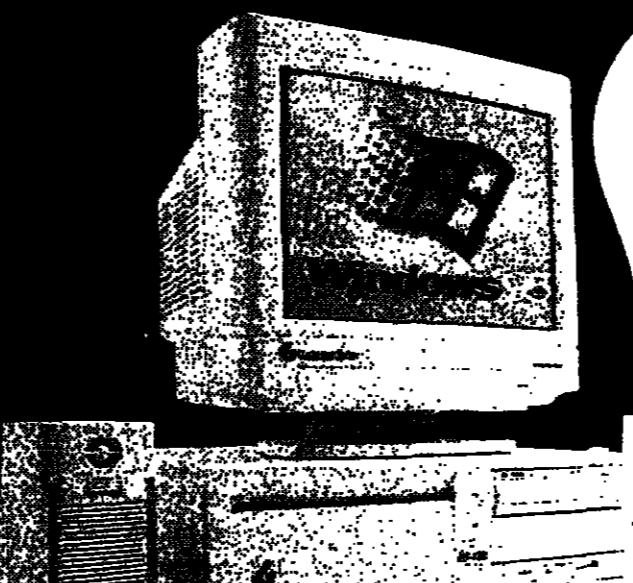
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news

Home is sweet for Ireland's children

An economic and cultural boom has turned the tide of emigration, writes Alan Murdoch

One of the greatest population upheavals of the 19th and 20th centuries has all but come to an end, according to Irish census figures published this week. More people are returning to enjoy the country's sustained economic boom than are leaving.

In each of the last five years, the average number of those returning has been 637 more than those leaving - a dramatic reversal of the mid 1980s, when 26,834 more people were leaving each year. Between 1982 and 1989, one in 20 of the population left what many then saw as a near-bankrupt state, with a foreign debt crisis, spiralling unemployment and penal levels of personal taxation.

Apart from one other brief period in the short-lived economic boom of the 1970s, the exodus has continued for 150 years. Pre-famine Ireland supported a population of 8.2 million in 1841, declining to 6.5 million in 1851. This week's census result shows the Irish Republic has 3,621,035 inhabitants and Northern Ireland 1,577,836 (1991 census). In the US, the destination for many emigrants, more than 40 million American citizens claim Irish descent.

After independence in 1922, economic stagnation and limited employment for both graduates and unskilled labour drove thousands abroad to Britain, the United States, Canada, and Australia. Census figures show this human procession peaked in the bleak years of the Forties and Fifties.

Depopulation was felt most keenly in rural parts of the south and west, marked by declining school numbers and increasingly aged populations. Dying rural villages entered the national culture in books such as John Healy's *No One Should Stop* and numerous plays, including Tom Murphy's *Conversations on a Homecoming*. "Emigrants' remittances", funds sent back regularly by family members in jobs in the US, helped sustain otherwise deprived households.

But now it seems there could be a permanent reversal. Ireland's surging economic growth rate of 7 per cent is the highest in the EU (1995 GNP volume growth estimate) while exports rose 16 per cent last year. Key successes have been in inward high-tech investment, tourism and service sectors.

The revival has also seen stereotyped foreign images of a misty country of bogs, dairy farms and narrow-minded Catholicism superseded by overseas interest in new Irish music, literature, art, theatre, and football.

Nowadays, more young Irish work nearer home in mainland Europe, and cheaper air transport allows more regular trips back, so departure is not as traumatic as 50 or 150 years ago. Then, parents knew the



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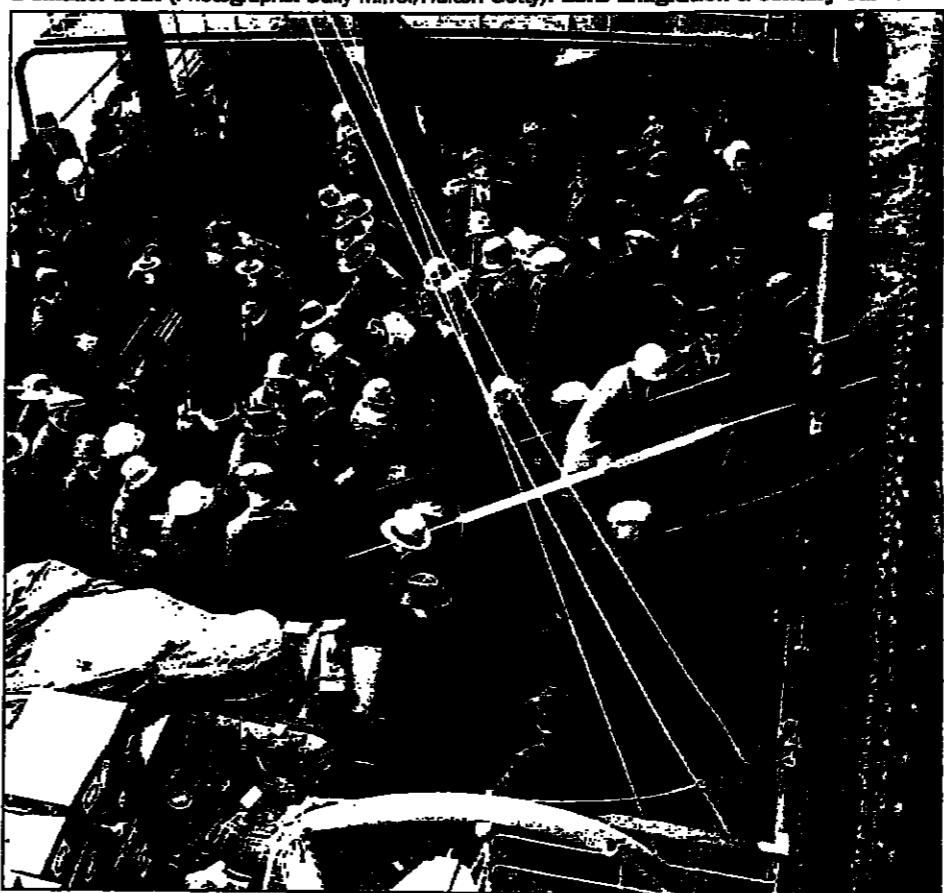
The Pool was set up by Dublin Institute of Technology professors who were concerned at the numbers of graduates going overseas and the consequent brain drain.

"After three years we had 5,500 overseas Irish contacts. We also do an airport questionnaire at Dublin and Cork and every Christmas, when thousands of people come home for the holiday, and we

hold a recruitment fair the following week," said Ms Mulcahy.

A newsletter with eleven issues annually advises emigrants of new business start-ups, expansions and vacancies, while a magazine, *Inform*, reaches 6,500 graduates. The government is also encouraging the return of graduates, by developing a database identifying Irish working overseas; in effect, a worldwide Irish employment agency.

Faces of a nation: An Irishman and his daughter on their way to a new life (above). Ocean liners took thousands to Europe and the US; below, a crowd is transferring a liner from a smaller boat (Photographs: Daily Mirror/Hulton Getty). Left: Emigration a century earlier



Top dogs in the salary stakes revealed

DIANE COYLE
Economics Editor

It has always been obvious that if you want to make a lot of money you would go into the City rather than anything really useful like medicine or engineering. But this is ridiculous: a "dog groomer" earns more than a junior hospital doctor, on a salary of £16,000 as opposed to £14,740-£16,640.

This is one of the findings of the annual salary survey in the September edition of *Esquire* magazine. The league table confirms the suspicion that, roughly speaking, the greater a job's contribution to society, the lower the pay.

At the bottom of the scale are those who feed us, teach us, make us better when we are ill, carry out research to improve the quality of our life or wear a uniform to protect us. A starting salary in catering is only £7,300. It climbs to just under £12,000 in further education. A laboratory technician can expect to start on £13,000. A squaddie will make only £10,746 and a young police constable will earn £14,412 a year.

Admittedly, someone who climbs the ranks to chief constable will earn just under £90,000, but that pales into insignificance compared with the six-figure salaries in banking or public relations.

Civil Service pay does not compare as badly as it did a decade ago. The range for permanent secretaries is £30,000-£34,400, and the senior bands are all above £38,000. The Lord Chief Justice is on £132,178 - peanuts by the standards of a top commercial barrister making half a million, however.

Whitehall is also doing very nicely compared to the rest of the public sector. An NHS consultant's basic salary can climb to £53,900, and top whack for a principal lecturer in higher education is £32,030.

Among those striking for more pay at the moment, postal workers make a modest £14,880. Drivers on London Underground are on £24,650.

MPs did not have to go on strike. They negotiated with themselves and settled on a 26 per cent rise to £93,000 from the current £34,085 (plus office allowance of £42,754). Many people would agree that the rule of thumb that the higher the pay, the lower the usefulness, is clearly in operation here.

Only the Royal Family is better paid than the country's top earners. The Queen gets £7.9m a year, the equivalent of more than 478 junior doctors. It makes the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester a snip at £175,000, or only ten and a half dog groomers. Or ten and a half dog groomers, for that matter, in a comparison that will make more sense to royalty.

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THE INDEPENDENT

WARNING - BEWARE OF IMITATIONS.

Cider is rosy: Traditional apple orchards and a favourite rural drink are back in vogue



Windfall harvest: Jane Mares, a traditional cider-making enthusiast, collects apples from Old Cleeve Orchard

Photograph: Christopher Jones

Scrumpy on tap as trees bear fruit

REBECCA FOWLER

A soft red blush has returned to Somerset with the scent of half-ripe apples. After nearly a century of decline, the county's orchards are coming back to life, and cider-makers are expecting their best harvest since before the Second World War.

The campaign to restore the traditional apple trees that once flourished in villages, has coincided with a booming demand for scrumpy, viewed until recently as the drink of old drunks and hapless adolescents.

Steve Scriven, who helped launch the campaign for Somerset County Council, said: "It's so much part of our rural heritage. After the war we lost so many orchards, but we are beginning to see a return to what was - the change in the image of cider has boosted interest

Somerset villagers are preparing for their first harvest in a decade. Their orchard, owned by the Crown Estate, was to be felled for house-building until earlier this year. But Jeanne Webb, 51, persuaded the Prince of Wales to plant the first new tree in March. In September the parish will sign a lease for £250 to grow apples for the local cider-producers.

Mrs Webb said: "People are waking up to the fact so many of our orchards have been lost, the ones that are left are treasures. We hope this one will pay its own way and always be there for future generations. We'll sell the apples to a local cider-maker and, when we get going, maybe market our own cider."

The largest cider-producers in Somerset have depended heavily on apple concentrate from abroad, but are now being encouraged by campaigners, including West Somerset District Council - which launched an orchard scheme last week - to use more local apples, such as the variety, Dunning Russet, which dates back centuries.

The Old Cleeve orchard will also revive another tradition. Gerald Stowell, 66, a retired railway clerk, has been appointed chief wassaller and will lead the New Year appeal to the fertility gods for a good harvest. "Wassailing is a very important part of the tradition and it will bring the whole village together. It's important to keep these rituals going."

Among the cider-producers who may buy apples from the orchard is Jill Gillman, 51, whose orchard, Torre Far in Washford, has 12,000 trees. She is anticipating the best year yet since she and her husband started making scrumpy eight years ago. "We are planting our own trees but have nowhere near enough for the cider we need to make to satisfy demand."

For some, the harvest is already overflowing. Inch's Cider, which uses apples from Somerset and Devon, is recalling thousands of bottles of scrumpy which could explode due to the potency of their content. Phil Collins, a company spokesman, said: "There's no health risk, but consumers are being advised not to move the jars, but to wait for them to be taken away."

At Old Cleeve, in west



'People are waking up to the fact that so many orchards have been lost'

DAILY POEM

Vowels

By Arthur Rimbaud

Black A, white E, red I, green U, blue O - vowels:
Some day I will open your silent pregnancies:
I, black belt, hairy with burst flies,
Rumbling and buzzing over stinking cruettes,

I, of night; E, candor of sand and pavilions,
High glacial spears, white kings, trembling Queen
Anne's lace;
I, bloody spitule, laughter dribbling from a face
In wild denial or in anger, vermillion;

U... divine movement of viridian seas,
Peace of pastures animal-strewn, peace of calm lines
Drown on foreheads worn with heavy alchemies;
I, supreme Trumpet, harsh with strange stridentes,
Silence traced in angels and astral designs:
I... OMEGA... the violet light of His Eyes!

Arthur Rimbaud (1854-1891), poet and adventurer, wrote the body of his verse between the ages of 15 and 20. It is still amongst the most important French poetry ever written, stunningly modern in its imagery and fragmented technique in a century that favoured the oblique and sentimental. Rimbaud's short life was colourful and dramatic. A love affair with Verlaine ended when Verlaine shot him in the wrist in a fit of jealousy. Rimbaud fled to Ethiopia where he lived on and off until his death.

GPs lose out on summer breaks

LOUISE JURY

Family doctors are being forced to abandon their summer holidays because of a shortage of locum GPs to look after their patients. Many are unlikely to get away this year, while the situation is so bad in Essex that some doctors have not had a holiday in five years.

The problem is an escalation of long-term shortages of GPs as more medical students decide against working in general practice combined with stricter rules on who can work as a locum.

Since January, only those trained for general practice have been able to act as locums, which rules out other doctors, such as retired surgeons.

Dr Lawrence Singer, chairman of the Association of Small Practices in Essex, said they frequently debated frequently how difficult it was for solo practitioners to find a locum. It was

particularly bad in rural areas. "We have a number of members who haven't had a holiday for four or five years," he said. "The problem is getting progressively worse. My day is from 7am to 10pm and you can't get people to stand in for that."

Dr Bob Button, secretary of the Hampshire local medical committee, said there were problems. "But going away can be the least of it. It's when a GP suddenly drops down ill that it's much more troublesome."

When one GP had to go into hospital recently, the health authority could find no locum and another practice had to take over the patients. "It is a problem the Government has been ignoring for a long time," he said.

Frances Cloyne, the Wessex faculty manager for the Royal College of General Practitioners, said research they were carrying out produced pleas from 50 practices for help in finding

locums with only 25 operating in the area. "Obviously there is a need out there. I know from experience that GPs are having difficulties, particularly for the summer holidays."

Jayne Mills, who runs the Taunton GP Locum Agency in Somerset, said the situation was "reasonably serious with the potential to get a lot worse".

"All the locums are booked to the hilt to September. Until last night I had 60 sessions that I didn't think I was going to be able to fill, but someone has come back from abroad for three months and is helping out," she said. "There are always pressures because of holidays, but the feedback this year is 'We're not going to get away this year'."

Research carried out by Professor Ray Robinson at Southampton University showed that trying to find a locum was one of the greatest pressures on a single-handed practice.



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Bosnia: Danger of partition if West backs down

Divided Mostar presents stark choice to EU

TONY BARBER
Europe Editor

European leaders today face one of their toughest choices yet in former Yugoslavia: either to carry out a threat to end European Union administration of the divided town of Mostar, or to back down and open the way to partition.

An end to EU administration would help to torpedo the town's peaceful reconstruction – but the alternative would give the green light to a Croat partition of the Muslim-Croat

Western governments were searching yesterday for ways to put pressure on President Franjo Tuđman of Croatia after his Bosnian Croat clients in Mostar refused to join a unified City Council. The EU and United States regard this as a deliberate blow at the Dayton peace settlement and an attempt to keep alive the option of partitioning Bosnia.

Mostar has been divided since the Muslim-Croat war of 1993-94, which left a Croat-controlled western sector and a Muslim-held east. The US is urging the EU not to walk away from Mostar, but the Bosnian Croat defiance of the EU underlines that the Europeans will need to rely on US diplomatic pressure if the Croats are to be brought into line.

The Bosnian Croats have refused to take up their seats on Mostar's council on the grounds that the city's elections last June were marred by fraud in polling stations abroad where Muslim refugees voted. The elections produced a narrow victory for a Muslim-led coalition and were declared fair by the EU, which viewed the Croat opposition as a smokescreen for their policy of maintaining a Croat political entity in Bosnia.

"The only people who are going to be drinking champagne in Mostar now are the [Croat] thugs, gangs and criminals," said the EU's administrator, Sir Martin Garrod, after Bosnian Croat leaders failed to meet a deadline of midnight on Saturday for agreeing to join the City Council.

Western governments believe the Bosnian Croat insincerity sets a dangerous precedent for Bosnia's first post-war general elections next month, which are supposed to help re-unite the country. They also blame much of the crisis on Mr Tuđman, since he has encouraged the Bosnian Croats' separatist ambitions.

"We are outraged by the Croat behaviour," a senior US official said. "What point is there in holding elections in September if one side knows that if they are disappointed with the results they can ignore

Leading article, page 11

Bad blood still runs deep in a town in no man's land, reports Adrian Bridge



town whose doors will be "open to all".

Before the war between Croatia and Serbia in 1991, Vukovar was a prosperous town with a mixed population.

But the scars of battle run deep, and for many of those involved – particularly in the

siege of Vukovar itself – the memories are still far too painful for talk of reconciliation.

The first Croat to come back to this town will be dead. I personally will pull the trigger," said Stjepan Vinković, a Serb veteran of the 1991 conflict in which 90 per cent of

Vukovar was destroyed by besieging Serb paramilitaries and the Serb-dominated Yugoslav army, and which ended with some 80,000 Croats being forced to flee after Vukovar and the entire eastern Slavonia region fell into Serb hands.

Under the terms of an agreement hammered out alongside the Dayton peace accords last November, eastern Slavonia, the last slice of Croatian territory still held by rebel Serbs, is to be reincorporated into Croatia following a transitional period under a United Nations military authority.

The plan also envisages the return of all the Croats expelled following the 1991 fighting, ideally in conjunction with the return of the tens of thousands of Serbs who fled to eastern Slavonia from other parts of Croatia over the past five years.

Officials with the 5,000-strong UN force based in Vukovar acknowledge that it is a daunting task, but insist they wish to prevent a re-run of what happened last year when Croat forces retook the Krajina

enclave, sparking a mass exodus of Serbs. "We are slowly trying to rebuild confidence... and to retain the multi-ethnic character of the region," said Jacques Klein, the American head of the UN transitional authority.

Since establishing their headquarters in Vukovar earlier this year, the UN forces point to a number of successes, most strikingly the removal of all heavy artillery from the region, the demobilisation of more than 10,000 men-in-arms and the peaceful takeover of the oil fields close to Vukovar, previously held by a Serb militia.

In addition, telephone connections with Croatia proper have been restored, as have postal services and – despite the fact that borders are not yet properly open – rail and road links. Serbs and Croats, moreover, have been jointly attending police training courses.

Mutual suspicion abounds. Local Serb leaders holding positions in what they still term the "Republic of Serbian Krajina" are horrified at the prospect of the transfer of power to Zagreb

and are set to appeal for a one-year extension of the UN's 12-month mandate in the region, set to expire in January.

Some Serbs recently staged a street protest in Vukovar to press demands for substantial autonomy in any future Croatian state – including the rights to retain their own flag, currency and anthem. Such talk is a red rag to Zagreb, which for its part is pressing for the earliest possible transfer of sovereignty.

In theory, that could be as soon as January, one month after the staging of local elections, which are themselves a source of friction between the two main sides. In practice, the UN forces are likely to remain in place for some time to come.

"With the UN here we feel we have some kind of protection" said Nikola Pajic, a 60-year-old Serb who sells his home-grown peans in the Vukovar market place. "Maybe we could all live together again but we Serbs are very worried about the future. It all depends on how the Croats behave when they take over."

Wind in gold medallist's sails lifts Hong Kong's hopes of unity

Hong Kong — It takes a lot to bring tears to the eyes and lumps to the throats of the hard-headed people of Hong Kong. But 25-year-old Lee Lai-shan has done it by winning the colony's first Olympic medal in 44 years of competing at the Games. Moreover this is the last time Hong Kong will appear under the British flag.

She has done more than the win the bronze, which some optimists thought she might manage. Ms Lee came home with a gold for windsurfing. This was so much beyond the expectations so

LOCAL HEROES

No 29: Lee Lai-shan

The rationale of this curious logic, as proposed by the *South China Morning Post*, was that Ms Lee has united political foes in a common cause of celebrating her triumph and that this unity of purpose might well be carried further.

Ms Lee, affectionately, and now universally, known as San San, is not averse to making a more general claim for her victory. "I didn't win this medal for myself," she said, "it is for all Hong Kong." And all of Hong Kong has wasted no time applauding her.

everyone, with the possible exception of her Dutch coach René Appel, that she is even now talked of as a person who can ease the bitter wrangling between Britain and China over the future of Hong Kong.

This is a place that loves winners and where bandwagons roll faster than anywhere else. Ms Lee hardly had time to make a tearful telephone call to her mother in Hong Kong before big companies were busy showering her with gifts.

She has secured a lifetime of free rides on ferries and the mass transit system. Cathay Pacific Airways will give her five years' worth of free travel, a newspaper group awarded her a HK\$1m (about £100,000) prize and sports goods manufacturers will give her any clothing she may

care to wear. Tycoons offered their congratulations in spontaneous advertisements placed in local newspapers. And, of course, politicians have been scrambling to get aboard the San San bandwagon.

The great thing about Lee Lan-shan is that she is a real Hong Kong woman. Coming from a modest background, growing up in a family of 10 children, struggling against the odds to make herself an international competitor, given little official backing until there was a hint of success, her strug-

gle to become a world league player is seen by many as a metaphor for Hong Kong itself.

Unlike most Hong Kong people Ms Lee comes from a rural background. She was born and raised on the island of Cheung Chau, one of the many small islands which make up the territory. The island's inhabitants are often regarded as rather quaint by the colony's urban population. Ms Lee's victory has added advantage of raising their status. As a child San San was far from being the most diligent member of her

family until her uncle introduced her to sailing. Ivy, one of her sisters, remembers San San as "Ms 70 per cent" because she never gave her full attention to any task – until she got the windsurfing bug.

Now expectations of San San have zoomed from lack of interest to the wildly unrealistic. Like many sports professionals, she is dedicated to her sport. The Hong Kong fame machine seems keen to turn her into a one-woman everything.

Stephen Vines



Lee Lai-shan: Her struggle is a metaphor for Hong Kong

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De Gaulle's spiritual heirs pay homage to Debré

MARY DEJEVSKY
Paris

France's Gaullist clan will turn out in force today in the Loire city of Ambérieu for the funeral of Michel Debré, one of the party's last living links with President Charles de Gaulle. Debré, who died on Friday at the age of 84 at his home in the nearby village of Montlouis-sur-Loire, was De Gaulle's first prime minister and revered as one of the chief architects of the 1958 Constitution.

The mourning will be led by President Jacques Chirac, who built much of his presidential campaign and the first year of his presidency around his claim to be the spiritual heir of De Gaulle. He will be accompanied by the head of the Gaullist RPR party and Prime Minister, Alain Juppé.

Most members of the Gaullist-led coalition government and a number of MPs are also likely to be in attendance, many of them breaking their holidays to show their Gaullist allegiance. Although Debré, a lawyer, had significant ideological differences with De Gaulle – notably over France's place in Europe and independence for Algeria – the differences were such as to mark Debré during his lifetime as "almost more Gaullist than De Gaulle".

The announcement of Debré's death at the weekend was followed by a succession of tributes that illustrated not only the esteem in which Debré was held, but also the continuing strength of the Gaullists' clan loyalty.

Tributes poured in, the first from Mr Juppé who is still struggling to establish his authority at the head of the RPR party, and described Debré as "a great statesman whose sole ambition was to serve France".

Characteristically, the mood – and political usefulness of Debré's memory in the current political context – was caught by President Chirac, who described him as "a reference and an example" who personified "rigour, high moral standards, a sense of what is meant by the State, and unfailing loyalty to the founder of the Fifth Republic" – that is, De Gaulle.

Some of the earliest tributes came from the younger and most politically astute members of the government: from Margie Sudre, the minister for the Francophone world – a native of Réunion, the island for which Debré was MP for many years – and Hervé Gaymard, the junior health minister, who at 38 is the youngest member of the government. In practice, the UN forces are likely to remain in place for some time to come.

"With the UN here we feel we have some kind of protection" said Nikola Pajic, a 60-year-old Serb who sells his home-grown peans in the Vukovar market place.

Local Serb leaders holding positions in what they still term the "Republic of Serbian Krajina" are horrified at the prospect of the transfer of power to Zagreb

De Gaulle is still held and the extent to which the authority and unity of today's Gaullists rests on his memory.

Today, in his oration, President Chirac is likely to capitalise on Debré's role as a founding father of the Fifth Republic, but he will doubtless also take the opportunity to claim legitimacy for his current policies from their "Gaullist" origins. Paradoxically, these are the very

De Gaulle: Held in awe

same policies on which Debré was personally least in agreement with De Gaulle: Europe and the nation state, independent Algeria and defence policy.

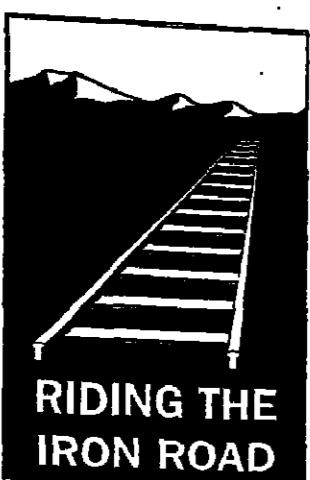
A month ago, the announced reduction of cuts in the French armed forces and final arrangements for the ending of conscription was accompanied by the presentation to Mr Chirac – by the defence minister – of an original De Gaulle document: a letter the young Lieutenant-Colonel Charles de Gaulle had written in 1935, arguing for France's armed forces to be fully professional.

The letter, which had been bought by the Defence Ministry when it came up for auction a few months before, was used to prove the incontrovertible Gaullist character of reforms that are unwelcome to a large section of the French military.

According to one French obituary writer, Michel Debré was anguished in his later years by the question of how it was possible to be a Gaullist without De Gaulle. "Perhaps," said the commentator, "Jacques Chirac supplies the answer."

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A nation that brings its style to the track



RIDING THE IRON ROAD

High-speed pendolini and air-conditioned carriages have swept away the enduring 1930s image of Italy's rail network. Andrew Gumbel on a post-war revolution

Travelling by train in Italy conjures up strong images: the awkward intimacy of six-seater compartments in the summer heat, and the murmur of human flotsam milling about in the corridors outside; the gusts of cool air puffing into the carriage beneath the lowered blinds; the half-glimpsed views of romantic mountain landscapes and dramatic coastlines; the tang of perfume and sweat mingled with the natural smells of lavender and pine wafting in from outside; the hesitant stabs at conversation between black-clad grandmothers, travelling salesmen, young conscripts and foreign tourists; the exchange of glossy magazines, the smiling offers of extra sandwiches from scrupulously packed picnic hampers; the periodic interruptions of raffishly uniformed guards asking for tickets or announcing the next station.

Such are the images that have inspired countless travelogues, novels and films, from the high-minded philosophising of modern Italian literature to the pop sex fantasies of Erica Jong. The central place that

running down the country like a spinal cord is the main line running from Milan, through Bologna and Florence to Rome, and thence to Naples, Calabria and Sicily. It is the quintessential Italian train journey, one travelled by countless migrant workers in the post-war period as they first headed north in search of work, then returned for the holidays to see mamma and the bloom of orange blossoms under the Mediterranean sun. It is a route that has changed dramatically over the decades, reflecting much of the progress and regional diversity experienced by Italy itself.

In Elio Vittorini's famous novel *Conversation in Sicily*, set in the 1930s, the Sicilian nar-



Route uno: Milan Central Station to Rome is Italy's top commuter run for business executives. The journey today takes five hours instead of 12. Photograph: Trevor Humphries

rator jumps on a train back home after seeing an advertisement in Milan station that reads: "Visit Sicily! Fifty per cent off from December to June, just 250 lire return to Siracusa, third class." He then embarks on a tortuous odyssey, changing trains in Florence (six hours down the line) and Rome (another six hours), taking a ferry across the Straits of Messina and ending up on the snail-like single-track line down the east coast of Sicily. The seats are all wooden, and there is no sign of a dining car; instead, the assorted characters in his carriage nibble on oranges and pieces of bread and cheese. These days the journey is cer-

tainly more comfortable, and much faster: third class went out with the Ark, there is air conditioning on most mainline trains, and the Milan-Rome leg takes just five hours by regular express instead of 12. Even if 250 lire won't get you very far, the prices are still very low, thanks to government subsidies that remain generous even in the market-driven 1990s.

What is most striking now is the sheer diversity of the trip. From Milan to Rome, the country's number one commuter route for business executives, one can now take the pendolino, Italy's answer to the TGV, which dispenses with the charm of the old railways in the

unblinking interests of speed. Yuppies sit in open-plan carriages, first class only, talking to virtually everyone they know by mobile phone, but studiously ignoring their fellow passengers. The pendolino even has its own special track beyond Florence, which accelerates the Tuscan countryside into a blur of fields and cypress trees and reduces the Mercedes on the adjacent motorway to crawling boxcars.

Beyond Rome, it is a different world. The trains may have been updated from the quaint old models with etchings of Italian tourist sites in each carriage, but they are unmistakably shabbier, and slower. The network does not have enough new

second-class carriages with air conditioning to go round, so on many southern lines old first-class carriages with fraying carpets and rusting window-frames have been requisitioned. The big figure 1 on the side of each carriage remains, only half-covered by a slip of paper with "2nd class" scribbled on in pen and notarised with an official railway company stamp.

In its progress past the Bay of Naples down the rugged Calabrian coast, the train chugs past places with what Vittorini described as "the names of ancient dreams" - the Phlegraean Fields, Vesuvius, Paestum and Scilla - which in reality are mostly half-finished develop-

ments in cheap concrete, the result of half a century of corrupt property speculation in one of Europe's biggest economic basket cases, the Mezzogiorno.

At Villa San Giovanni, on the toe of the Italian boot, the train disengages from the tracks and climbs onto the back of a special ferry to take it across the thin strip of water separating the mainland from Messina in Sicily. It is a laborious process, taking an hour-and-a-half, and a bitter reminder to regular travellers of the bureaucratic hesitations that have prevented the building of a much-promised bridge across the Strait.

In Sicily, the pace slows to a crawl. Endless development funds have built motorways and airports for this shimmeringly beautiful but troubled island, leaving nothing to update a paltry railway network that has remained virtually unchanged since the war. The 230 kilometres from Messina to Palermo take three-and-a-half hours, the 180 from Messina to Siracusa only half an hour less.

There is rarely a dining car, just a trolley-man offering his wares: "Birra, panini, acqua".

Not entirely unlike the 1930s, the passengers munch on bread and oranges and curse their fate as Sicilians, "always hoping", as Vittorini wrote, "for something better, but always despairing that they can ever have it".

Il Duce: Mussolini gave network national identity

THE INDEPENDENT

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SIGNIFICANT SHORTS

The Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat, acted to defuse the explosive situation created in West Bank cities by the death of one Palestinian prisoner tortured by Palestinian police and the fatal shooting of a second man by Palestinian security forces quelling a riot.

A Jericho court sentenced two officers and a sergeant, who beat Mahmoud Jammal to death in a Nablus lock-up, to 15 and 10 years' hard labour. Mr Jammal, who had been held for seven months without charge, died from cardiac arrest brought on by a fractured skull. Mr Arafat yesterday ordered the release of 15 Hamas prisoners in Tulkarm, where security men fired on a mob on Friday, killing Ibrahim Hadaway, a Hamas activist. Islamic militants responded by calling for a new intifada against the Palestinian Authority and the Israelis. *Eric Silver - Jerusalem*

Sri Lankan troops renewed a thrust against Tamil Tiger rebels in the north. Air force bombers and helicopter gunships pounded rebel positions as troops returned their advance at dawn from northern Paranthan towards rebel-held Kilinochchi, 180 miles north of Colombo, after a week-long lull. The Tigers accused the troops of indiscriminate shelling of Kilinochchi, saying nearly 200,000 civilians had fled the town. Reuter - Colombo

The bodies of a pilot and a flight engineer from TWA Flight 800 were recovered from the sea-bed off Long Island. The bodies were found by divers, apparently in the area where the jet's cockpit was spotted on Friday. Investigations are continuing into the cause of the crash in which 230 people died. AP - New York

A 30-year-old Spaniard died after being gored at a bull fiesta in the eastern Spanish town of El Puig. Witnesses said José Almela had been taking part in a local fiesta in which a bull is let loose with villagers in an arena made by blocking off the streets. Reuter - El Puig

Two National Guardsmen were shot early yesterday as they left a restaurant in Atlanta. One was killed and the other was wounded. The guardsmen had been posted to Georgia to help with Olympic security. AP - Atlanta

The Mafia plotted to blow up the Leaning Tower of Pisa in 1993. Florence's chief prosecutor told a seminar on Mafia crimes. He said explosives unearthed earlier this year at Formello, just outside Rome, had been intended for use in an attack on Pisa's 12th-century marble bell tower. Reuter - Rome

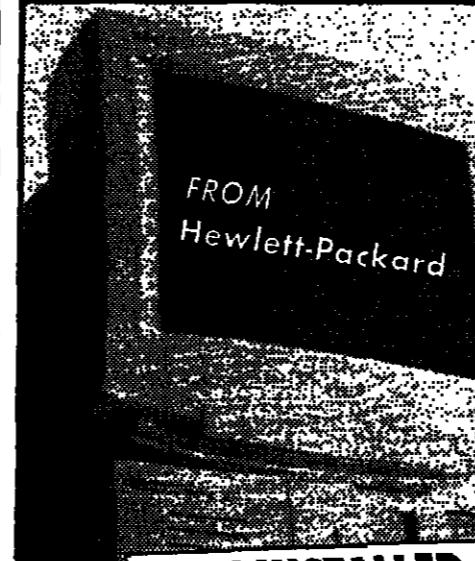
Libyan security forces have arrested scores of traders, shop owners and a senior government official in a nationwide anti-corruption sweep. Libyans arriving in Egypt said they had heard Muammar Gaddafi last week set up "purification and security" police squads to jail and seize the goods of people suspected of boosting their income illegally. The head of the drug enforcement wing in Benghazi, Colonel Nouri Isba'a, was among those arrested. Communication between the provinces was cut to ensure the sweep's success. Reuter - Mersa Matruh

A statue of the Pharaoh Ramses II, one of Egypt's most glorified ancient rulers, has been unearthed by excavators. Archaeologists say the 3-ton granite statue could help fill gaps in the history of the Giza plateau. Reuter - Giza

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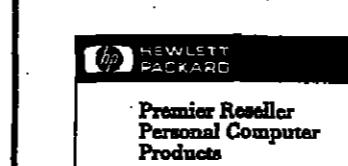
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international

Aideed's son assumes mantle of power in Somalia

DAVID ORR
Mogadishu

Aidied is dead, long live Aidied. That was the message from Somalia yesterday, just two days after the funeral of Somalia's most notorious warlord, General Mohamed Farah Aidied. It was announced yesterday that Hussein Aidied - the son - had been elected President of Somalia by a council of clan leaders. His father, who died from wounds received in fighting nearly two weeks ago, declared himself president of the war-torn country last year.

Control of the country has been bitterly contested by the forces of General Aidied and those of Ali Mahdi Mohamed, who declared himself president

five years ago. With the overthrow of the late Siad Barre in 1991, Somalia was plunged into a vicious civil war which still continues. The conflict has claimed the lives of more than 300,000 Somalis and reduced the capital, Mogadishu, to rubble.

Hussein Aidied had been acting as his father's chief of security and as chief arms-buyer for the faction which controls southern Mogadishu and parts of the interior. Aged 31, he holds Somalia and US citizenship. In 1993 he was part of the United States intervention force which came to Somalia under a UN mandate to restore peace and protect humanitarian aid convoys. A US Marine reservist, he served as an interpreter.

American troops were pulled

out of Somalia in 1994 after suffering humiliating losses at the hands of General Aidied's fighters. The US launched a series of heavy air-strikes on the capital during 1993 in an attempt to eliminate General Aidied, but the warlord escaped unhurt. In the fighting which raged around the city, 36 American soldiers and an estimated 100 UN peacekeepers, mostly Pakistanis, were killed.

UN peacekeepers withdrew from Somalia early last year. A number of UN agencies, however, remained in the country, particularly in the central town of Baidoa which had evaded the worst of the war. Hussein Aidied looted UN property in the town after it was seized by his father in September.

Mogadishu has been calm in the wake of General Aidied's death and burial on Friday. However, his clansmen and supporters have vowed to continue his struggle for overall control of the country. "He was a hero," said one of his faction's fighters yesterday. "His death was a tragedy. But we will continue to follow where he led. Nothing will change."

There are some here, particularly in the northern part of the city held by Ali Mahdi, who believe Aidied's death might turn the course of the war. Yesterday, Dr Mohamed Ahmed, a lawyer who lost two children in the conflict, said: "Without Aidied it will be easier to have peace. The international community tried to

facilitate reconciliation but he prevented it. He was a man who only understood fighting".

Looking out through the door of Dr Ahmed's recently-opened practice near the Green Line, you can see a cameo of Somalia's suffering: artillery-blasted buildings, a one-legged young man on crutches, youths in camouflage jackets cradling automatic rifles in their arms.

"I hated Aidied's politics," says Dr Ahmed. "But when a man dies in the Muslim world, we do not condemn him. It was his politics we hated, not the man. Now I hope there will be a more reasonable leadership."

There is little reason, however, to believe that the Aidied administration will in any way alter its claim to power, now the

leader is dead. Hussein Aidied is seen as being a hardliner in the same mould as his father.

"If Ali Mahdi or anyone else wants to talk to us that is all right," said Mohamed Kanyari Afrah, the Aidied administration's interior minister. "But we will never give up our position. We are the legitimate government of Somalia and we will never accept that someone calls us a faction."

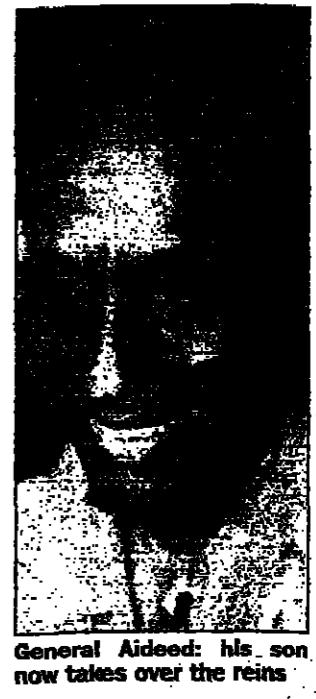
The Aidied administration accuses Ali Mahdi of pandering to foreign interference in the country's sovereign affairs. Ali Mahdi welcomed the UN's peacekeeping mission; he now wants to establish a national reconciliation council to pave the way for elections.

"Ali Mahdi wants to put

Somalia under UN trusteeship," said Mr Kanyari. "But we cannot accept the leadership of foreigners. That would be to reduce us to being less than human beings. Our independence is very dear to us".

It was quiet in Mogadishu last night apart from the thrumming of electricity generators and the blare of radios as the people of Somalia listened to the unfolding news of General Aidied's successor.

But many fear that, having mourned the loss of its leader, the Aidied faction will seek revenge for his death, with Hussein Aidied at the forefront of the butchery. And then the pointless cycle of killing will start again, as it has done with murderous frequency over the years.



General Aidied: his son now takes over the reins

Chechen gunmen kidnap aid workers

MOSCOW — A 23-year-old Briton has been kidnapped by gunmen in Chechnya, along with a Frenchman with whom he was working on an aid mission to the war-torn Caucasian region.

Russian officials said a special task force had been set up to look for the two men, Michael Penrose and 35-year-old Frédéric Malardeau. So far, nobody has claimed responsibility for their kidnapping.

"We received a phone call from someone who said he saw armed men bundle the two foreigners into a car in Grozny," said Igor Pogosov spokesman for the Moscow-approved Chechen Interior Ministry.

Interfax News Agency said a man identifying himself as Bolat Adayev had telephoned journalists in Chechnya from the southern Russian city of Krasnodar and claimed the kidnappers wanted half a million dollars for the men. But their employer, the Paris-based aid organisation International Action Against Hunger, said it had yet to receive a ransom demand.

"The people who kidnapped them also took radio equipment and mobile telephones, so they can call us any time," said a spokesman, Jose Bilgin. But he made clear they had little chance of extorting money from the aid agency.

The two men had been delivering food parcels to vulnerable people in Chechnya, including pregnant women and the elderly.

Mr Penrose and his colleague are not the first aid workers to be kidnapped in Chechnya. Earlier this year, two representatives of the French organisation Médecins Sans Frontières were seized but their captors released them unharmed after two weeks.

The American aid worker Fred Cuny, who went missing in April 1995, was not so lucky. His brother said after his death that it appeared he and his three

British and Frenchman disappear on food mission, writes Helen Womack

Russian companions had been executed on suspicion of spying.

Much will depend on the group that has carried out the latest kidnapping. Chechen separatist leaders denied responsibility but they are split and have little control over their wilder elements.

Despite his election promises, President Boris Yeltsin has failed to bring peace and order to Chechnya. No sooner had he been returned to the Kremlin for a second term on 3 July than fresh fighting broke out.

Russian negotiators are in the area, trying to revive the peace process. But the Russian Army continues to attack villages while the rebels are also active again. Last month, the hard-line guerrilla Salman Raduyev, believed dead, resurfaced after plastic surgery. There are rumours that former Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudayev, declared dead and buried in April, is actually alive and will soon return to Chechnya.

Reuter — Chechen separatists accused Russian forces of killing dozens of people in overnight attacks on a string of villages, the Interfax News Agency said yesterday. It quoted Movladi Udgov, press spokesman for the rebels, as saying the main attacks were on the villages of Borzoi and Guchin-Kala in the south of the region. The Russians are said to have bombed Itum-Kalinski, Nozhay-Yurt and Shatoi regions at about 11.30 p.m. (19.30 GMT) on Saturday, and five villages were reportedly attacked with artillery.



Dawn raider: A Chechen woman carries a rare bag of produce to Grozny central market. Food shortages and crime are a daily struggle in the war-torn region. Photograph: AP

'ANC traded charges for party donations'

MARY BRAID
Johannesburg

A sacked government minister has caused a furious reaction with his allegations that senior ANC members, including President Mandela, accepted favours and political donations from a casino magnate, in return for bribery charges against him being dropped.

The claims by Bantu Holomisa, the country's former Tourism Minister, who was sacked last week, have led ministers to take the unprecedented step of instigating legal action against a former political colleague.

Thabo Mbeki, the Deputy President, and Steve Tshwete, the sports minister, have served lawyers' letters on the former minister, warning him to stop repeating "spurious, untrue, and defamatory remarks".

Mr Holomisa claims that Sol Kerzner paid for Mr Mbeki's 50th birthday party in 1992 and that Mr Tshwete accepted Mr Kerzner's offer of free accommodation at Sun City, South Africa's Las Vegas, last year.

On Friday, Mr Holomisa, who is a popular figure within the ANC claimed that President Mandela himself had called him to Johannesburg's Carlton Hotel in 1994 to brief him about a 3 million rand donation to the party coffers from Mr Kerzner and to discuss the possibility of dropping bribery charges made against Mr Kerzner in Transkei.

The escalating row now threatens the unity of the ANC itself.

Meanwhile, the National Party is demanding an immediate investigation. It is linking Mr Holomisa's dismissal with the party's private business and the privacy of donors had also to be respected.

"They say I am lying," said Mr Holomisa. "But so far no one has denied the meeting with President."

Mr Kerzner was reportedly by ANC officials have denied Mr Kerzner paid for Mr Tshwete's hotel bill or Mr Mbeki's birthday party. But they refused to comment on the alleged multi-million rand donation.

Last week, an ANC spokeswoman said that donations were the party's private business and the privacy of donors had also to be respected.

promised legal action against Mr Holomisa. But he did not deny making any ANC contribution.

"What I contribute is my business," he said. "And I have never contributed to any cause in return for favours."

Yesterday, Mr Holomisa remained defiant, inviting ANC officials to see him in court. "I will stand by what I have said in any court."

He is also threatening to take the ANC to the Supreme Court to state its reasons for sacking him.

Another day, another 16 lives snuffed out

MARY BRAID
Tembisa

By the time we reached Tembisa township, flames were licking round the entrance of the station. A few hours before, 16 people had died in a stampede sparked by a clampdown on ticket-dodgers in which security guards used electric cattle prods on commuters.

Down the hill, hundreds of black youths stood in groups, eager to finish off the station they had already petrol-bombed. Smaller groups of men, teenage boys and a few women milled around the journalists and police. Cradling their rifles, the policemen — predominantly white — watched the crowd swelling below.

I'm a rookie foreign correspondent, new in the region. My experience of this kind of confrontation comes from television. Presented with the real thing for the first time, I felt like walking on to a film set. Everything and everybody is just where you would expect them to be — except for yourself.

The attack on our car came from nowhere. There was a ripple in the crowd, the buzz of voices rose to a crescendo and within seconds rippled became

riots. The Daily Telegraph man was at the wheel when the stone-throwing started. I crouched behind the car as youth after youth ran forward to launch his missile. The stones rained down, hitting the car with dull thuds. I felt no panic, just the same sensation of being out of time and place.

I do remember thinking I never bought the oranges or drank the wine, not once in all those boycott years. But this was hardly the time for ripping off your jumper to reveal your anti-apartheid T-shirt. We were taking a pounding, the wheels were stuck. The man from the Times crouched beside me got back into the car.

To the left, police were advancing down the hill, rattling off rubber bullets. The oddest thing was that everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves: it was a return to the old days and to a game which could be deadly but whose rules we all understood. The stone-throwing continued from the front; the township — complete with gleeful, cheering audience — was on the right. I was embarrassed to find myself suddenly running, dodging stones, away from the police and into Tembisa. Behind me was the sound of shattering

glass as a stone hit the driver's window, narrowly missing the occupant.

So I found myself behind the lines, alongside the stone-throwers and chorus. Two men ushered me into a shop and someone brought a seat. The woman behind the counter tussled over me. Between pats to my hands and shoulders customers ran back and forward to the door to continue cheering. My colleagues had by now driven off and the rioters turned on an empty red Volkswagen belonging to a local journalist.

He had never been to Tembisa before and it is unlikely he will rush back. Not one piece of glass remained in his car when they had finished.

As men danced on his roof, the police again opened fire. And so it went on: attack, scatter and run; consolidate, attack, scatter and run.

Near by, three little boys in smart school uniforms, not one over eight, stood watching and learning. It was just another lesson in the violence endemic in South Africa. It is such a background noise that only the grossest stories make the papers. It was the cattle prods that made the Tembisa story exceptional, not the loss of 16 lives.

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JULY 1995

The West must halt Croatia's ambitions now

Bosnia is being bungled again. The Bosnian Croats in one half of the city of Mostar are still refusing to work with the Bosnian Muslims who live in the other half. The European Union, which has the unavoidable responsibility of administering the city, organised elections to a unified municipal council at the end of June. But when the Mostar Croats decided to boycott the council (after the Muslims won) the EU threatened this weekend to pull out of the city altogether.

The future does not look bright. If we can't stop Mostar being partitioned between the different nationalities, we stand very little chance of holding the Bosnian state together. The municipal election in Mostar is the forerunner of the all-Bosnian general election, due in September. Elections to multi-ethnic institutions were supposed to provide the framework for holding the Bosnian state together. But if the Mostar elections are in effect sabotaged, the prospects for a reconciliatory general election look slim. And on a united Bosnia, the entire Dayton peace accord depends.

It is worth remembering what's at stake. The Dayton peace accord brought to an end five years of war - a war driven by the pursuit of ethnic cleansing and national partition, and characterised by horrific atrocities on all sides. At the heart of the agreement was the rejection of a divided Bosnia - something that the Serbs and Croats

(in and outside Bosnia) had been pursuing all along.

If Bosnia were chopped up into three separate national entities, it would not be long before the Bosnian Serbs joined a new Greater Serbia, and the Bosnian Croats joined a new Greater Croatia. The nationalists' call to arms at the beginning of the war would have been rewarded. Moreover, we would have failed to place a boundary on their expansionist ambitions: the tiny remaining Muslim Bosnian state would be in an appealing, vulnerable position.

Hence the importance of pursuing a single Bosnian state of all three nationalities - the deal on which Dayton was signed. This is also why the self-proclaimed Bosnian Croat state within a state, Herzeg-Bosnia, should not be allowed to prevail, and why the unification of Mostar (the Croats' favoured capital of Herzeg-Bosnia) is so important.

A viable Muslim-Croat city at the heart of Bosnia need not be beyond the wit of international organisation. The Muslims are game - in fact they are determined, having most to lose if Bosnia collapses. Meanwhile, the Croats are not grass-roots politicians representing the irrepressible demands of their local population. According to the EU officials in charge of Mostar, they are rather more gangsters and nationalist paramilitaries, heavily reliant on Croatia for support, and vulnerable to Croatian discipline.

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The links between the Croatian government and the Herzeg-Bosnia politicians should not be underestimated. Croatian President Tudjman has, on occasion, made no secret of his long-term expansionist vision. Whether overtly, or covertly, he has been encouraging the Bosnian Croats to resist the dissolution of Herzeg-Bosnia for some time. Gojko Susak, the Croatian defence minister, is a Bosnian Croat rather than a Croatian national. Having left Bosnia for Canada, he made his money in pizza parlours and then returned to bankroll the Croatian president, and buy himself power.

Back in Bosnia, the Croat separatists fly the Croatian state flag, use the Croatian currency, and have formed themselves into the Croatian Democratic Union - the same name as Tudjman's party in Croatia itself. Tudjman has more power and influence over the Bosnian Croats than anyone else, so it is in Croatia rather than Bosnia that the Mostar problem has any chance of being solved.

What should we do, to tackle Tudjman and to unite Mostar? Sadly, where "we" refers to the EU, the question is almost irrelevant. When the US intervened to get the Dayton peace

process going, it was the final decisive blow to the crumbling credibility of the EU in the Balkans. Now no one takes anything the EU says seriously at all.

The US took a step in the right direction on Friday, by applying direct pressure to Tudjman. The Croatian President was summoned to Washington to meet President Clinton, and supposedly agreed to tell the Bosnian Croats to dissolve Herzeg-Bosnia and accept the Mostar elections. Several days, countless Croatian government envoys, and hours of Mostar negotiations later, the Croats still refuse to back down.

Faced with such resistance, the West must continue with the pressure on Tudjman, and make good the US threat to turn Croatia into an international pariah unless it completely abandons its expansionist ambitions. Croatia should be excluded from international arenas. No new trade agreements should be negotiated. We should continue to withhold membership from the Council of Europe. And we should be prepared to exclude Croatia from sporting events too.

Enforcing a united Bosnia while so many tensions remain will not be easy. NATO will need to remain heavily involved in the region long after the current end-of-year deadline has passed. But the EU should accept that it will need to stay in Bosnia - monitoring, facilitating, and keeping a political peace. We allowed Croatia to build its mil-

itary strength and its territorial ambitions during the war. It was Croatian armed power that tipped the balance against Serbia and made peace possible. But now that peace is here - for the time being - the Serb-Croat-Muslim equation looks rather different. If anything, Croatia appears to have emerged with the winning hand. For the sake of international justice and future peace in the Balkans, we have a responsibility to put the brakes on Croatian trouble-making now.

The virtual manager is here

Sir: Albans accountants are heading a revolutionary path. Not for them the endless rounds of introductions, forgotten names, and sweaty handshakes whenever new staff arrive. Instead, computers will provide virtual tours of the office layout, and its inhabitants.

The accountants think it will save them time and money - but, oh dear, why do they have to live up so obviously to their impersonal stereotype? Don't they know that a little human contact goes a very long way?

Still, they might have a germ of an idea. Like, virtual goodbyes. Managers could avoid all the pain of firing people by getting a virtual version of themselves to do it instead. Or is that such a good idea ...?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Shooting is not a pastime for deviants

Sir: If Bryan Appleyard thinks that this time the "mob" is right, on the subject of gun control, then I do hope that the right questions were asked ("This time the mob has right on its side", 1 August). The proposed non-discriminatory handgun ban would sweep away a great many historical arms and antiques in a manner reminiscent of the Reformation. Next time you are in a museum, disposed to admire the craft of some 16th century gun maker, be grateful there was no purge carried out in the 18th century.

I would also hope that the appetite of Bryan Appleyard's "mob" would extend to other, quite definite, life-saving measures, like reducing urban vehicle speed limits to 20 mph. There is no longer any doubt that this would save the lives of dozens of children each year. But how many drivers would support such an inconvenient though life-saving measure, and not even a crusading journalist would dare call those who opposed such a move "irredeemable loonies".

D. EADSFORTH
Winchester

Sir: A witch-hunt is easy to start, less easy to control (Bryan Appleyard, 1 August). Those who puruse shooting in all its many variants as a pastime are all members of the public, many with wives, or husbands, and children, not some curious deviants.

I have enjoyed target shooting since joining my school rifle club, more years ago than I care to remember, and now particularly enjoy shooting replicas 18th and 19th century firearms, including pistols. I also enjoy driving my vintage Austin. Both hobbies involve an appreciation of design, engineering and performance, and skill in handling and maintaining. For which do I wear my "loony" hat?

Are all of us who extend our skills and knowledge via hobbies "loonies"? P. GILLETT
Farnborough, Hampshire

Sir: Amos Miller (Letters, 3 August) implies that guns have no utilitarian use. He forgets their prime purpose is defence of this country. Like archery, however, shooting provides a test of skill and has subsequently become a sport. His cur dismissal of the interests of a law-abiding minority ("they can find a new hobby") should worry everyone who thought Britain was a tolerant and fair-minded nation.

RICHARD BALMER
Suffolk

Sir: Inner city schools are for the most part islands of good order, good learning and good relationships. At least that is generally so in Birmingham. But the streets around us are home to a culture of drugs, knives and guns. This does not only apply to the inner city. Head teachers report a sharp increase in threatening incidents, especially involving uninvited disturbed visitors, during the past two terms.

The gun lobby must not prevail. Our society can no longer afford the dubious luxury of handguns. They must be banned.

JOHN RAY

Chairman of Governors
Golden Hilllock Secondary School
Birmingham



Sir: Surely it is the ultimate hypocrisy of our society that it can clamour for a ban on the private ownership of firearms yet at the same time condone the routine diet of gun-related violence presented nightly on our TV and cinema screens in the name of "entertainment".

This public appetite for violent screen gunfire contrasts starkly with the legitimate and responsible sporting use of those who own and use firearms legally.

MAURICE KANARECK
London NW1

Sir: Driving through the US state of Montana some years ago I gave a lift to a talkative local teenager who told me he collected handguns as a hobby, just as his father did. Remonstrating in the usual British way, that handguns are for killing people, I was assured that I was wrong - handguns are for killing rattlesnakes. How are rattlesnakes these days in Dunblane, or for that matter in Westminster?

OLIVER WRONG
London W1

Sir: Of course it is not safe to allow people to keep guns at home. As a GP I once refused to leave a surgery for an inappropriate emergency visit. When I did visit an hour later I found the man polishing one of his (legally owned) guns, which just happened to point in my direction. I felt thoroughly intimidated, as I am sure was intended.

I reported this to the police who told me that they had no power to review his firearms licence in these circumstances.

Dr PETER WALTERS

Basingstoke,
Hampshire

Time to regain Olympic ideals

Sir: I couldn't agree more with Nick Walker ("Let the disabled join the freak show", 30 July). Why, in an age when we are trying so hard to let everyone have the rights they deserve, do we have a separate Olympic Games for disabled athletes and treat people like second-class citizens because they are not good enough for the "real thing"?

The opening ceremony of each Olympic Games is now a massive experiment in manipulation to make us to feel what a wonderful experience we are enjoying with the whole world competing together on "a level playing field". When the whole world includes people who on a daily basis deal with disabilities that would defeat most of the people that are competing at Atlanta why should they be excluded?

The Olympics should be an event where "amateur" sportspeople can enter secure in the knowledge that they are competing in a world arena with the best of their class. I find it difficult to understand how professional teams are acceptable when some of the best "amateur" sportspeople are excluded because they are disabled.

The Olympics are no longer "a level playing field" and we should be trying to regain that ideal and include those who are at the top of their field regardless of their physical abilities or disabilities.

RICHARD DARRELL

Harpender,
Hertfordshire

Sir: Last week, Paul Palmer, one of our Olympic sporting successes, subscribed to the theory that success in sport in Britain is on the whole in spite of the system and not because of it. On the same day John Major announced the introduction of sports scholarships in an attempt to improve our world standing ("The way to turn silver into gold", 25 July).

The question that springs to mind is "what level of sporting success do we want to achieve?" Although I am sure we would like to move away from our reputation for heroic failure, would we want to become like the Americans at these Games in that if their competitors don't win gold, they are considered underachievers? To the viewing public I don't think there is any greater feeling than occasional success. When it occurs, it carries that surprise element that can lead to national euphoria.

Compare this with the expectation that comes with extra funding and support.

Of course we need to give our athletes more financial backing, but not to the extent that it creates an undue burden of expectation. Paul Palmer is only 21 years old. He has just won a silver medal in the 400 metres freestyle in the Olympics. In Sydney in four years' time I hope he wins gold.

But I also hope the country does not expect him to.

RICHARD DARNELL

Harpender,
Hertfordshire

Concern for Burundi

Sir: Since 1993, up to 150,000 people have been killed in Burundi in what has been referred to as "slow motion genocide". Now the situation in the central African state has sunk deeper into crisis.

The UN is appealing to member states to contribute to the setting up of a regional force, but experiences in Somalia and even recently in Rwanda have shown that military intervention presents neither a clear nor easy solution.

Military intervention is needed and must be supported, but on its own it is not enough - it has to be combined with continued and renewed international pressure on all sides to bring parties to the negotiating table. The international community must continue to demonstrate the strongest support for the mediation efforts entrusted to the former Tanzanian president, Julius Nyerere. We must renew efforts to achieve a settlement not only in Burundi, but also in the surrounding region.

Continued funding, pressure on political parties on both sides, military intervention to stop the killings, initiatives from high-level officials, continued dialogue, continued pressure and above all continued interest are all necessary. If we allow ourselves to think there is nothing we can do, then we have accepted that every day, many more people will be killed.

DOMINIC MacSORLEY

Concern Worldwide, London SW1

Legalised brothels exploit prostitutes

Sir: The calls for legalised brothels reflect increasing public concern with prostitute women's safety and civil rights. It may also reflect the Government's drive to cut the unemployment figures.

Legalised brothels usually go hand-in-hand with police crackdowns against street workers - the most vulnerable women whose protection the police have rarely prioritised. As with other workers, women without alternatives must accept the worst conditions from employers. Unless women are able to work collectively from their own premises without being subject to regulation, licensed establishments can impose conditions which are more exploitative than at present. Where legalisation exists, it has further trapped women on the game and made it harder for women to keep their earnings, institutionalising state pimping. The prostitution stigma remains.

Most women prefer to break the law, and keep their earnings and independence - only an estimated 12 per cent of women work in Germany's legalised areas. Recently in Amsterdam sex workers threatened to go on strike over licensing proposals which discriminated against immigrant women.

Legalised brothels by themselves would protect neither safety nor civil rights. What is needed is for the exchange of sex for money between consenting individuals to be removed from the criminal law.

NIKI ADAMS

NINA LOPEZ-JONES
English Collective of Prostitutes
London NW6

Names please

Sir: Isn't it odd that during the whole of the BSE epidemic the general public has never been told the names of the animal-feed manufacturers who are responsible for it? Surely they have a right to put their version of how they came to transform ruminants into carnivores - a process which most people find abhorrent. And, since I suspect they may have links with those conglomerates which provide food for humans, surely we all have a right to know who they are.

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Angry men at an Ulster crossroads

Last week the UVF was forced to disband its rebellious Portadown unit. Steve Bruce questions whether the loyalist ceasefire can hold

Against a background of disputed Orange marches and widespread rioting, political talks that are going nowhere and a resumed IRA bombing campaign, last week's decision by the Ulster Volunteer Force to disband its notorious Portadown unit offers a powerful insight into the chances of the loyalist ceasefire holding.

To grasp the significance of this expulsion, we must trace the history of the relationship between violence and politics, between the "military" core of the UVF (the smaller but potentially more dangerous of the two loyalist organisations) and its political expression in the Progressive Unionist Party.

The PUP, led by David Ervine, Billy Hutchinson, and a former Lord Mayor of Belfast, Hughie Smyth, was formed in the early 1980s, but it only came to national attention in 1994 when the possibility of an end to violence gave us all a reason to listen to the public spokesmen for the UVF.

The modern UVF was formed in 1966 by working-class Unionists fearful that the tentative reforms of the prime minister, Terence O'Neill, would stimulate Irish nationalism in the north and concerned that republicans would mark the 50th anniversary of the Easter Rising with an insurrection in Belfast. The leading figure was Augustus "Gusty" Spence, a shipyard worker and former soldier whose family were active in the west Belfast branch of the Unionist party. Spence's small band drilled, collected weapons, fund-raised by robbery, and murdered three people, all innocent victims of unfocused aggression. In a matter of months, Spence was in prison serving a life sentence for his part in the murder of a young Catholic barman.

Serving a life sentence was an education for many loyalists as they came to terms with the irony of their position: apprehended, charged, sentenced and guarded by the agents of the very state they wanted to defend. In the unpromising surroundings of an old army camp hastily commissioned to

hold the internees and sentenced prisoners, Gusty Spence found his mission.

To maintain morale and group solidarity, he initiated a firm regime of military discipline, with drills, guard rotas, and kit inspections. Prisoners were only allowed to consult the prison doctor with the permission of the "Officer Commanding", and any prescribed drugs were held by the OC and carefully dispensed. Spence also began classes in which he taught his young charges their history.

The UVF inside the Maze

exemplified the military structure and discipline so patently lacking in the organisation on the streets, where, in addition to the centrally sanctioned bombings, republican terror was matched by the ruthless cruelty of small gangs murdering randomly selected civilians and inflicting as much damage on their own people as on the nationalists who were supposedly their enemies.

On the gable walls of the Shankill Road, Spence was portrayed as a hero: square jaw, dark glasses, commando cap. In the Maze, the real Spence became increasingly critical of

Unionism. He readily asserted that the Protestant working class had been as much victims of 50 years of Unionist misrule as had northern nationalists, and he began to demand a liberal Unionism that tried to incorporate northern Catholics in its vision.

However, Spence's socialist rhetoric fell on deaf ears. The UVF outside was too deeply embedded in the day-to-day world of murder, retaliation, and racketeering to care much what Spence thought. Then Chief of Staff memorably tore up one of Spence's letters from prison. Another senior figure mocked his military bearing by calling him a "cunt in a cravat".

Disillusioned by the sectarian violence, Spence resigned from leadership of the UVF prisoners. But his influence continued. Billy Hutchinson, now a leading figure in the PUP, succeeded Spence as Officer Commanding the UVF prisoners. Outside, a coup replaced Brigade Staff with men who had been close to Spence in the early days. As the overall levels of violence declined, the incidence of random sectarian mur-

ders went down and the interest in providing a distinctive political direction went up. On his release from prison in 1985, Spence talked and wrote and, in stressing that violence without political direction is worse than pointless, promoted the cause of the PUP to the UVF.

The first tangible benefit of

the UVF's thinking came in

it was 16, then 17, building in 1993 to 47 victims. Most of this was the work of another paramilitary group, the Ulster Defence Association, but a lot of it was the UVF, and in particular the Mid-Ulster UVF.

The IRA cease-fire of 31 August 1994 caused many Unionists to fear that it had been bought by a covert British promise of a united Ireland, but it also created the conditions that allowed the politicians within the UVF to take the initiative. On 13 October, Gusty Spence read out a statement from the Combined Loyalist Military Command apologising for the violence perpetrated by loyalists and announcing a cease-fire that was conditional on only two things: the continued cessation of republican violence and the understanding that the Union itself was not in danger.

The UVF had come full circle. Spence had started it and Spence had, many hoped, finished it.

Since the IRA's resumption of bombing in February of this year, the loyalist cease-fire has been under increased pressure, and one symptom of that is the sabre-rattling from the Mid-Ulster branch of the UVF. Last week, after further easing its way out of the organisation by announcing that it was no longer following the political direction of the Progressive Unionist Party, it was formally disbanded by the central leadership. In the most serious charge that can be made in Loyalist world, it had denounced the PUP for aligning itself with "the pan-nationalist agenda" and accused David Ervine of being a traitor to the Protestant people.

The Mid-Ulster UVF has

always operated at a remove from the Belfast Brigade Staff,

thing the British government responded to was violence.

Wright has always been closer to Ian Paisley's evangelical vision than to the secular liberal Unionism of the UVF. He shares the general loyalist disdain for politicians who make militant noises and then denounce those who act militantly, but he has considerable sympathy for the Paisleyite view that nationalists are not serious about reaching an accommodation, that London and Dublin are slowly pushing Northern Ireland out of the United Kingdom, and that compromise will be seen as weakness. Where Ervine and Hutchinson base their Unionism on the citizenship rights of the people of Northern Ireland, Wright thinks in the religio-

leader of the largest constitutional party could refuse to meet the ex-IRA man who represents the Garvaghy Road residents but felt obliged to talk to Wright and his supporters.

The record of the Mid-Ulster UVF shows that its threats need to be taken seriously; it has killed a lot of people and can do so again. However, though it is callous to treat any murder as insignificant, the occasional assassination has only slight potential for destabilising the province. The large dangers lies in the main UVF, which is reportedly now very well equipped with commercial explosives. In the 18 months before the cease-fire, the UVF set off a number of bombs, with varying but increasing efficiency.

Within the councils of the

UVF, Mid-Ulster has had little influence. Many of his comrades view Wright as a self-aggrandising publicity-seeker. The danger is not that Mid-Ulster will persuade the rest of the UVF to break its cease-fire, or even that Mid-Ulster murders will stimulate the IRA to become more active and thus increase pressure for the loyalists to re-negotiate. The real danger lies in the political uncertainty that, in a form more extreme than in the rest of the organisation, is being reflected in Mid-Ulster.

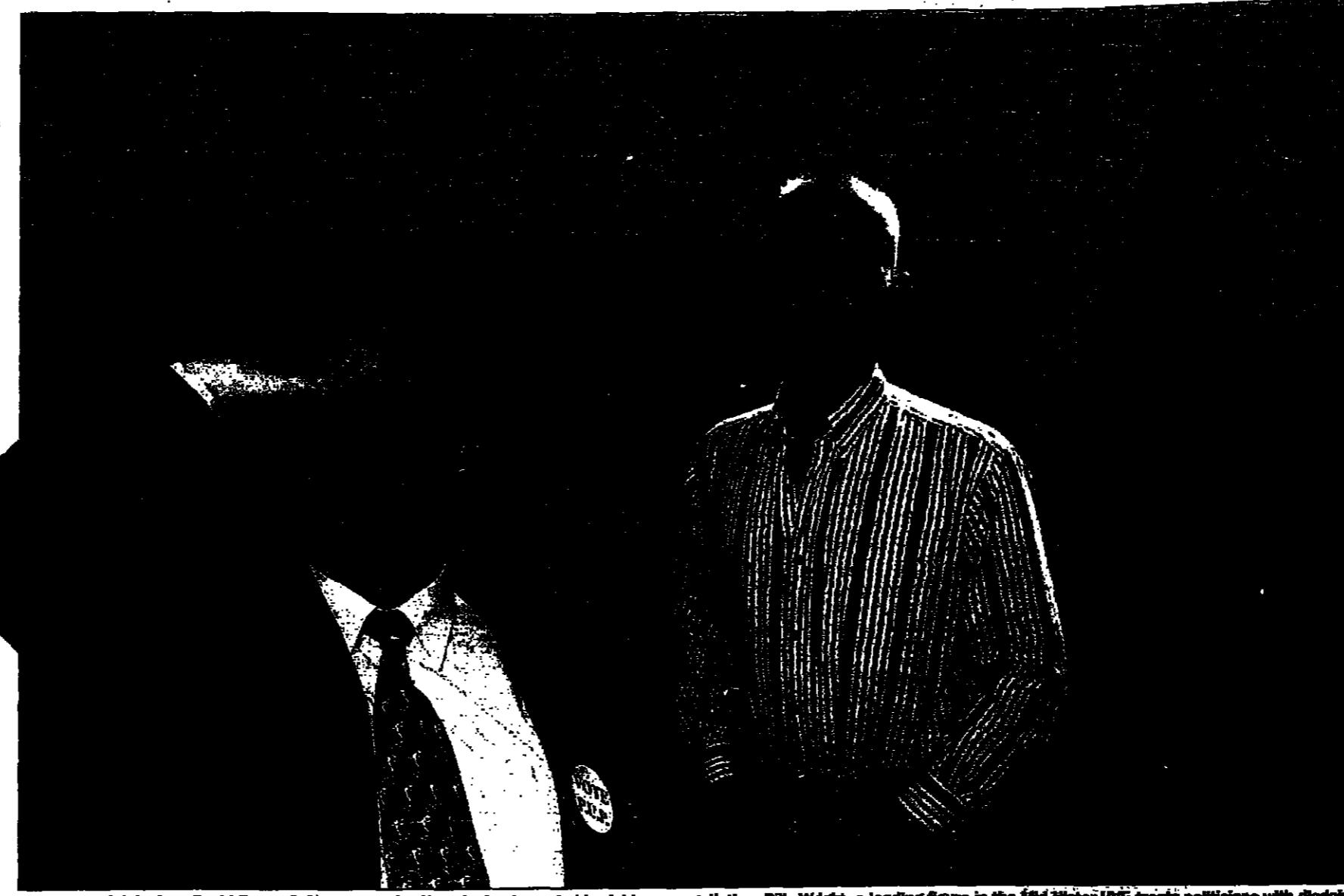
Though their tactics are different, loyalist paramilitaries are motivated by the same considerations as other Unionists. If one plots loyalist killing rates over the past 30 years, a simple pattern emerges. When either republican violence or British government initiatives (or worse, both together) suggest that the Union is in danger, Unionists become fearful for their position and the murder rate goes up.

The part of the UVF most influenced by Spence is accommodating and liberal. It will accept power-sharing within Northern Ireland. It proposes a Bill of Rights to safeguard the interests of all citizens. It will accept cross-border agencies on small matters of mutual interest with the Irish Republic. But it remains Unionist. Despite Mid-Ulster's charge of treachery, and the more vociferous criticism from Paisley's Democratic Unionists, the Progressive Unionist Party still means the second word in its title. Its representatives at the party talks will continue to be at odds with the Paisleyites because they will stick to the UVF script on decommissioning: no weapons will be handed over until there is a plausible final settlement.

The expression of the Mid-Ulster unit shows that the PUP retains the confidence of the UVF, but, in the brutally honest self-assessment of one PUP activist: "No one should make the mistake of thinking that the UVF will swallow massive and bitter pills just to keep Davie [Ervine] and Hughie [Smyth] in the talk."

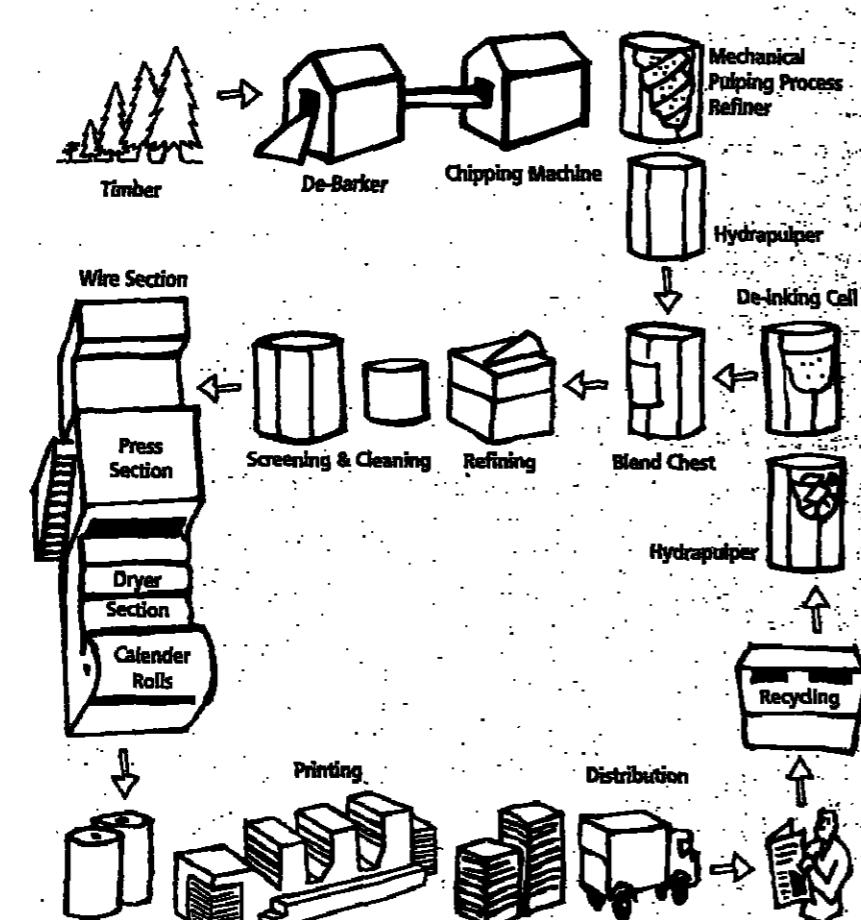
The mature Gusty Spence believes that he was wrong in 1966 to use violence to defend the Stormont regime of the Unionist party, but the organisation he created based its 1994 cease-fire on two conditions: an IRA cease-fire and the maintenance of the Union. The first has failed. If, in order to restore it, London gives too much to Dublin and northern nationalists, the second condition will fail, and with it, if we are to believe the UVF's assessment of its capability, any chance of peace.

Steve Bruce is the author of *The Red Hand: Protestant Paramilitaries in Northern Ireland*.



Two faces of Unionism: David Ervine (left), Progressive Unionist leader, sets his sights on negotiation; Billy Wright, a leading figure in the Mid-Ulster UVF, treats politicians with disdain

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The Ballad of Edinburgh Fred

As I set off to the Edinburgh Festival today, I am reminded of a long poem which I don't think I have ever brought to you before. As you know, I am an avid collector of modern folk verse, especially motorway ballads, and this long ballad was told to me by a lone cyclist whom I once gave a lift to en route to the Edinburgh Festival. I never saw him again, though I still have his unicycle, if he cares to contact me.

Oh, I am part of a two-man show

And over the world the two of us go.

There's me and Fred, and Fred and me,

And nobody else that I can see.

Comedy mime is what we're at

We do our stuff and pass the hat,

And we have been all over the place

From Burnham-on-Crouch to Camock Chase

From Marrakesh to Tripoli

Making a living uncomfortably.

But the place where we will never return

The place we'd rather will-

The place whose memory makes us cringe

Is the place they call the Edinburgh Fringe.

Oh, we went to the Fringe in ninety-four.

- We'd neither of us been there before

And thought that it was well-

That we hitched north with our comedy mime.

Well, straight off we got a bit of luck

- A lift with a brand-new pick-up truck -

And there in the back already there were

Five people going to Edinburgh.

Introductions all round were made.

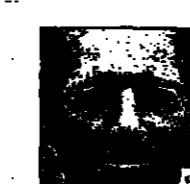
And comedy juggling was made.

And we were up at the Fringe last year.

Said a girl, with a very slight hint of a tear,

"And we lost twenty thousand quid."

"More like thirty," said a boy



Miles Kington

called Sid.

"But we are going up again, Once more to burst the barrier of pain."

"It's like a drug," their leader said.

Haggardly cycling me and Fred.

"When you leave the Fringe on the homeward train,

You swear you'll never go back again.

The empty houses, the lack of reviews.

The take-away food, the smelly shoes.

The lack of sleep, the quiet despair.

- All of this vanishes in the air

And after a fortnight, come September,

The only thing you can remember Is the occasional fun you had.

Not the things that were so bad.

And so we're going again to get

Even further into debt."

They laughed like a group of maniacs.

As they sprawled on their dusty bags and sacks.

Every shop with a window spare,

Every cafe, every bar,

Every house and every car,

Anything at all in Edinburgh

That's large enough and doesn't stink.

Will be covered in flyers on every wall

So better Carlisle than nowhere at all."

This tragic ballad goes on for hundreds of lines, and tells how Fred and the narrator are so appalled by the tale of woe, and by the sight of broken-down vans full of theatre props still trying to get to Edinburgh, that Fred and friend turn round before they ever get to Edinburgh and head back south again.

the commentators

The Home Secretary who is above the law

Michael Howard knows when the courts will reprimand him. But he doesn't care – public opinion is what counts

It is deplorable, if not always surprising, that the Home Secretary is regularly in the headlines for breaking the law. Every few months we read that he has been fundamentally unfair, or he has circumvented his obligations, or he has disregarded a contract of employment, or failed to follow correct procedures, or abused his powers. How can it be that the Home Secretary himself, responsible as he is for large parts of the criminal justice system, frequently acts unlawfully? I sometimes wonder if he is a bit like President Nixon's Attorney General at the time of the Watergate scandal, John Mitchell, who likewise knew the law, held an office that was responsible for it, yet found himself on the wrong side of it.

My picture of Michael Howard is this. A question comes before him, say, regarding his powers to regulate the prison sentences of convicted murderers. Recently it was the case of the boy who killed the toddler James Bulger. Mr Howard is not one of those ministers who arrive in office wholly ignorant of the work of his or her department – he was a practising barrister for a long period. The Home Secretary per-

fectly well understands the principles of the law. He reads in an informed way the excellent legal advice at his disposal. He listens likewise to his civil servants when they warn him of any risks he faces in embarking upon a particular course. Of one thing, therefore, we can be sure. The Home Secretary is not the least bit taken aback when the courts reprimand him. When asked for his reaction by TV reporters, we see him relaxed, smiling, not a care in the world. Mr Howard is not an Ian Botham, genuinely amazed at losing in the High Court.

Mr Howard can live with these setbacks to his plans. It is obvious that he is much more concerned by the judgement of a less formal tribunal – the court of public opinion. For the very action that earns him a judicial reprimand can bring him support in the tabloid press. The judge who ruled that the Home Secretary had unfairly forbidden the Rev Sun Myung Moon, founder of the Moonies, from entering the United Kingdom was attacked by the *Daily Mail* for having attended a Communist summer school in his youth. The *Daily Express* denounced "the sickness sweeping through the senior judiciary – galloping arrogance".



ANDREAS WHITTEAM SMITH

Indeed the letter from the Home Office to the boy murderers of James Bulger conveys the Secretary of State's decision to raise the minimum period they would spend in prison specifically mentioned "the public concern about this case which was evidenced by the petitions and other correspondence". Never mind that the judge's original decision took into account the need for public confidence in the system, that the petitions may have been unfairly conducted, that after the minimum sentence fixed by the judge has been served, the Home Secretary of the day could in any case forbid release and reconsider the situation later – these are academic points to Mr Howard. I believe he

does not mind that the new Master of the Rolls should describe his actions as a departure from standards of fairness required; he will have seen that coming. What counts much more is tabloid applause and the politics of law and order.

If this were the sum of it – the Home Secretary's handling of the dreadful Bulger murder, the notorious Rev Moon and one or two similarly high-profile cases – one could limit one's comments to being worldly wise. Home Secretaries are ambitious politicians near the top of the greasy pole. Politicians commonly put party advantage ahead of the national interest and confuse the two.

This explanation, however, does not fully explain Mr Howard. He goes much further. When he decided, for instance, to sack the head of the prison service, Derek Lewis, it must have been clear from the contract to which the Home Office is party that the compensation should be, or that it could be negotiated. But poor Mr Lewis is forced to go to court to compel the Home Secretary to pay up. To take another example, Mr Howard is under pressure to cut his department's expenditure. He decides to reduce

the compensation paid to the victims of crime by changing the regulations. It is inconceivable that his officials failed to point out that Parliamentary approval would be required. But presumably the Home Secretary did not fancy explaining this measure to the House of Commons so he announced it on his own authority. Would anybody notice his omission?

As it happens, the trades unions representing people who risk violence at work (fire-fighters, prison officers etc.) did so, they sought judicial review and won the case. The Master of the Rolls said that the "Home Secretary, by implementing the tariff scheme, has acted unlawfully and abused his prerogative or common law powers." He must submit his proposals to Parliament.

Mr Howard is not just your average naughty politician, a Westminster wise boy. He is more than that. His attitude to the law is deeply cynical. He seems to say to himself, "I may be Home Secretary but I'll still see what I can get away with." I don't believe there has been a more dangerous holder of this great office of state in the past 30 years.

Game of the name

William Hartston

All this hand-wringing and soul-searching over our poor Olympics performance is totally misguided. The true cause of our failures lies in team selection: there are simply too many Nicks and Johns in the team and not enough Davids or Michaels. For comparison, look at the following table with a breakdown of MPs' names in the principal parties:

Name	Cons	Lab	Lib-Dem
David	28	8	3
John	25	24	0
Michael	24	8	0
Peter	16	7	0
Nicholas	9	2	1
Andrew	7	5	0
Timothy	9	0	0
Patrick	6	0	0
Brian/Bryan	1	5	0
Gordon	0	4	0
Dennis	0	3	0
Kevin	0	3	0

The table reflects the general prevalence of the name "John", which also shows no preference between the two main parties (though oddly most of the "Rt Hon Sir Johns" are Tory). Michael and Nicholas are clearly aligned with the Conservatives, and while David is more Con than Lab, the three Lib-Dem Davids (from a total of 20) represent a highly significant David quota in a curiously Johnless party. The distribution of the Timothys is statistically the most significant result, however. The Tories appear to have captured the Tim vote, though Labour have a stranglehold over Kevin, Dennis and Gordon. In other professions, the second table tells a different story:

Name	Cri	Soc	Eff	Luv	Oly
John	22	30	6.9	4.3	3.9
David	3.7	5.3	4.9	4.8	3.9
Michael	3.5	2.5	3.7	3.8	0.6
Peter	1.1	1.6	4.9	3.5	2.8
Andrew	3.2	2.5	0.7	1.8	2.8
Timothy	1.9	0.5	0.7	1.0	1.1
Kevin	1.3	1.8	0.4	0.7	1.1
Wayne	0.6	0.2	0.0	0.4	0.0
Daren	1.9	0.9	0.2	0.1	1.7
Jason	1.9	1.6	0.0	0.2	0.6

The figures represent the percentages of each name at the top of five professions: County Cricket (Cri), Premier League Soccer (Soc), 500 wealthiest Britons (Eff), Actors (Luv) and the British Olympic Team (Oly). As may be seen, the Davids continue to outperform the Johns at everything except making money. Kevin, Wayne, Darren and Jason fare better at sport than politics, though surprisingly not better at soccer than cricket. Cricketers generally retain the longer form. Andrews (who almost invariably truncate to Andy on the football pitch) are hopeless financially and underperform on the stage, where they have been overtaken by Simon, Mark and Paul. Andrews are, however, more likely than any other name to edit national broadsheet newspapers.

Prisoners of the fourth estate

If we want a better monarchy, we'd better stop driving the royals insane, says Melvyn Bragg

We need a Society for the Protection of Royals, if only on humanitarian grounds. The media are steadily hunting them down. Like the white rhino, they're an endangered species; and if we feel they have a place on the planet, we need to take action.

Today, in photographs, they are haunted by a common expression: desperation. What are they for? Where can they hide? What have they done to deserve these relentless telescopic lenses?

This is not the least of the growing list of reasons for the speedy provision of a drastically reduced role for the monarchy. *The Crown* remains as a bloated reminder of days long gone. The global sack of blood and power that swelled our Headship of State to competitive Imperial proportions has run dry. While the rest of us are trying to shake down into the real new world, the monarchy grows more and more grotesque in its blundering size and its implacable legitimisation of all the indulgencies of privilege. But if the spiralling parodic nature of our uncontemporary monarchy is not guided soon to quieter shores, I can see the youngest of the royals themselves becoming the barricades for republicanism – because their life has become intolerable.

The intensity of the press scrutiny must boil their brains. No one, in my view, can undergo or be trapped in such ferocious attention without going some way mad. The fact that some of them have become addicts and feed off the publicity as much as it feeds off them only compounds their miserable condition. Bad enough to be hounded: near-lunacy to play the prey.

This family, once supported by real props of society who looked after its dignity, who built high walls around its inevitable weaknesses, who gave it a specialness that found justification in a powerful section of society's understanding of itself, is now proppless. The roof has caved in.

Who looks after the Royal Family now? Which class or cadre really defends it? Where has that great clique of civilian Household Cavalry gone in the Windsors' hour of need? Underground, or into retreat? The royals have never needed them more,

but their supporters are scattered, regrouping only in an occasional charge into the letter columns.

The Queen Mother's 96th birthday gives us a perspective. When she and her husband were on the throne, not a contrary pip or squeak reached the public ear about any blemishes, let alone stupidities or wickedness on their part, and perhaps there was nothing to reveal. Result? Universal adulation, the nation knew where it was, the Queen Mother enjoyed the job 100 per cent, and smiles all round.

Leaks begin to come through the ceiling with the next generation. The cruel handling of the Princess Margaret-Townsend affair, the persistent gossip about the Duke of Edinburgh, the early worries over a young prince clearly being forced into a mould he did not like. Result? Unease as the decades dragged on, poor decisions about the media. And people wonder why the Queen doesn't smile except with corgis and horses.

The sight of them being broken on the public wheel is sickening

In the following generation, all hell breaks loose. Future queen makes shock TV confession of suicide attempts, conspiracy fears (thought to be well-based), unsuitability of husband as new king, own affair with horsey blabbermouth. Future king meanwhile has confessed adultery, while questions are publicly asked about the quality of one brother's intellect and the bias of the other brother's sexuality, and a duchess will sooner or later meet a man she wants to make love to. What are the odds that it will be allowed the slightest chance to grow or prosper? The Prince of Wales similarly will want to put his new house in order – but where and how? Meanwhile, the next generation, if they have any sense, will think: why should we put up with all that?

If the UK wants a modestly positioned constitutional monarchy – which I do – then it has to treat the royals better. At the moment, we flay them around the playground in a most astonishing reversal of roles. But the nation laps up this new blood sport. The royals begin to panic. Even the steady Queen rushes out to do some fire-fighting and is thought to be spiteful (removing that HRH). General mess. Save the Wales takes on a whole other meaning.

But there is more to go. The next batch is being fattened up at school.

Tagged by the press and television as surely as heavy prisoners on parole.



Once, a poor boy was taken on as the young Prince's whipping boy, to be punished for his young master's errors. It seems we do the opposite. Many in the UK do not like the fact that we no longer "rule the waves" and they glorify our past.

It is time that the royals were treated much more as the limited individuals that they – like the rest of us – undoubtedly are. And none of us could stand that sort of public pressure. The sight of them being broken on the public wheel is sickening. They

have fallen foul of the fairy-tale and become the objects not of desire but of what can seem a determined crusade to destroy their stability.

Who can advise them as they swirl helplessly around the great plug-hole of history, which has swallowed so many redundant rulers before them? Only themselves, I think. They must take the initiative and say: we will do the job, but only if you call off the hounds, and recast the crown to fit the times. It would be a right royal act. New Style. New Britain. New Monarchy.

Good-bye battery



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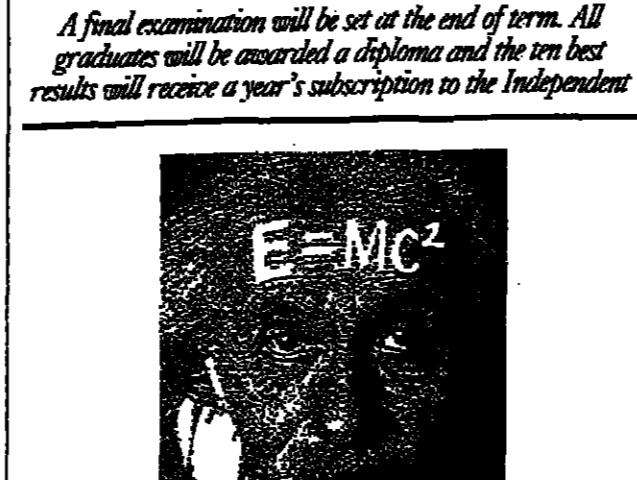
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energy there is at any one spot, the more that space and time are curved right around it. A tetchy little object, such as our Earth, only bends the space around it a little bit; the more macho Sun tugs the underlying fabric around it more tautly.

It seems a preposterous view – how can seemingly empty space be warped? But in 1919, an English physicist led a team off the west coast of Africa, where a solar eclipse allowed the scientists, briefly, actually to see distant starlight being swivelled around the sun. It was like watching a bank shot in billiards suddenly take place in the sky overhead, where nobody had ever suspected a curved corner pocket to reside.

With the First World War just ended, this was wondrous. God may have seemed lost after the trenches, but now order had been divined in the cosmos. Even better, a German and an Englishman working together had found it. Einstein, instantly, was the greatest media celebrity on the planet.

He took it calmly, saying that because his prediction had been proven true, the Germans were calling him a German, and the French were proclaiming him a citizen of the world; but if his prediction had been shown

The story goes that Einstein was at a dinner party in Princeton in the late 1940s when one faculty member dared to address the great man. When I get my good ideas, he said, I jot them down in a little notebook so I don't forget them. What do you do? And Einstein replied, Ah, it's so rare that I get a good idea ...

Everyone laughed, but by this point it was true. He had popular esteem, but it was now years since his main contributions had been made, and the new generation of physicists disregarded him.

It had been so different before. His happiest times had been in the first years of this century, long before fame, when he was just a new university graduate in his early twenties, living with friends in Switzerland, then married to a bright female student. He was earning enough money from an easy civil service job to spend his evenings and weekends in pub visits, or long walks, or, above all, in having the time to think.

From his early work came the special theory of relativity, published when he was 26, which looks among other matters at the way a fast particle or spaceship will appear to get distorted in shape as an outside observer watches it as

the French would have called him a German, and the Germans would have called him a Jew. In fact he got it wrong: his astronomical prediction stayed true, but with the rise of Hitler the Germans still called him a Jew. He left the Continent, and tried England, but Oxford did not take favourably to Jews then, certainly not ones who saw no reason to respect the class system, and he ended up in Princeton.

How unique was his work? Researchers in France and the Netherlands were getting close to his special theory, and would have caught up soon. It was his second theory, concerning gravity, which was more individual, as no one else was even close to handling that vision of object-curved space. But even that would probably have been reached in a half-century or so.

That's the cursed trade-off of scientists: you get to make excellent, clear advances but if your results are true, describing something genuinely waiting out there, then anyone else can catch you up. You end up utterly replaceable; in time, your particular style or flair long forgotten, only future historians will know that you've been there at all.

Tomorrow: the Big Bang

obituaries/gazette

Bishop Pierre Claverie

A terrible game is being played in Algeria.

In May seven French Trappist monks were murdered by Islamic extremists. In July the man who had claimed responsibility for these murders, named Zitouni, was himself assassinated by a rival group of terrorists. When it was announced that Hervé de Charette, the French foreign minister, was going to make an official visit to Algiers, the first by any French minister for some three years, it was obvious that this would be a moment for an Islamic demonstration

which would avenge the death of Zitouni. This took place when a bomb was placed in the car of the Bishop of Oran, Monsignor Claverie. The game continued when, after the Bishop's death, the French and Algerian governments announced the concrete results of their meetings, which included expenditure by the French government on economic and cultural matters.

It was said that one of those who had foreseen that violence would attend the diplomatic visit was the Bishop of Oran himself. He knew the

dangers that always accompanied someone who was a spokesman for Christianity. The French government has repeatedly called on French nations to leave Algeria, and some 160 priests and nuns have left in the last year. About 200 remain, although their Christian communities have shrunk to some 20,000 (the number used to be double that in 1980). And, most striking of all, it appears that young priests and sisters who have just been ordained are ready to volunteer to go and work in Algeria.

The role of the Church in

these territories is perhaps the finest that Christians can have. There is no attempt to convert; although there is a great deal of social work and this occupies much of their time, this is not the main responsibility of the Christian Church in Muslim Algeria. The main responsibility is discussion. The two religions are linked together in particular problems and uncertainty. By discussion they both can become richer. Pierre Claverie said that the key word in his religion was "dialogue".

Claverie was born in Bab el

Oued, the district in Algiers which was populated by many French people of modest means. He was the fourth generation of French settlers, and he therefore saw Algeria very much as his home. He went to France for his education, and also to Egypt. There he learnt Arabic. In 1965 he was admitted into the Dominican order and returned to Algiers to teach the language. He taught classical Arabic to French people. That religious differences can be important is inevitable. But that such differences lead to the assassin-

ation of a good man, like the Bishop, is unacceptable. The Communist newspaper in Paris, not normally attached to bishops, gave an interpretation of the news that struck everyone. A drawing shows a bearded Muslim pulling a trigger, and saying, "He was always talking of peace and fraternity. Now he won't get in our way any more."

Douglas Johnson

Henri (Pierre) Claverie, priest: born Algiers 8 May 1938; ordained 1965; Bishop of Oran 1981-96; died Oran, Algeria 1 August 1996.



Claverie: 'peace and fraternity'

Les Allen

Children of the Thirties were divided sharply into two listening classes. There were those who listened to Uncle Mac pretending to be Larry the Lamb in the BBC *Children's Hour* plays of Toytown, and there were those who bounced about to the rhythms of Henry Hall and his New BBC Dance Orchestra, who occasionally made a gesture towards their younger listeners with the musical adventures of Rusty and Dusty Brown, a small boy and his even smaller dog. These two very different programmes clashed exactly, running from a quarter past five to six o'clock, one on the National Programme, the other on Regional, choice being governed by parents who knew how to operate the requisite switches.

I was one of those who was brought up on Henry Hall. And so, instead of Larry the Lamb, Mr Grouse and Captain Higgin the Pirate, the names which dominated my developing days were Len Burman, who sang "Leave the Pretty Girls Alone"; Phyllis Robins who wailed that "Me and My Dog are Lost in the Fog", and Les Allen.

It was Les who really hit home to the children of the wireless age when he crooned: "Little man you're crying, I know why you're blue, someone stole your kiddy-car away. Time to go to sleep now, little man you've had a busy day."

Les Allen was not the first of Henry Hall's famous vocalists. But just as Hall replaced the original conductor of the BBC's dance band, Jack Payne, in 1932, so Allen replaced Hall's original male vocalist, Val Rossing, in the October of that year.

It was the Hall organisation that made Allen a national favourite, but in fact he had been singing and playing in British dance bands from as far back as 1924, when he recorded for Columbia with the New Princes Toronto Band a rather un-croonish number based on the already ancient riddle, "Why does the chicken cross the road?" He made quite a few discs with this band, including a duet with the conductor, Hal Swain, "Padlin' Madeline Home". Swain would later form a highly successful band of female saxophonists which he called Hal Swain's Swinging Sisters, who toured the variety theatres to great acclaim.

Leslie Allen was born in London in 1902, and at the age of three emigrated with his family to Toronto, Canada, where he was taught to play both the clarinet and the tenor saxophone. As a boy he showed enough talent to win silver medals from the Young Men's Christian Association, and

broadcast frequently on Toronto's first ever radio station. He was scarcely out of his teens when he came back to England with his fellow Canadian Hal Swain, and soon they were providing the dice-and-dance music at the New Princess Restaurant in Piccadilly, adding what was then a still unusual transatlantic tone to the hits of the day.

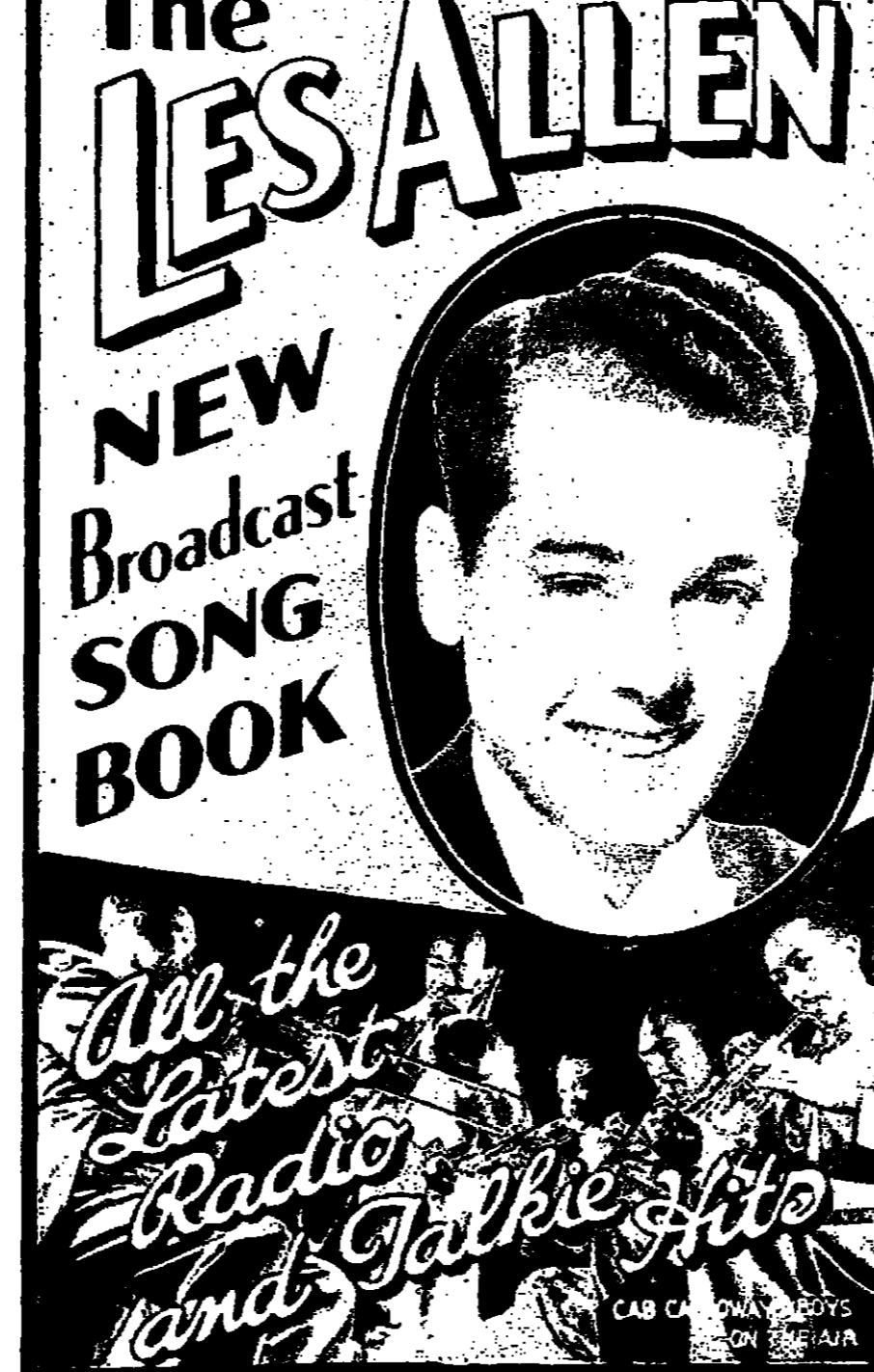
By 1926 Allen, still primarily an instrumentalist, was playing tenor sax slightly further upmarket at the Park Lane Hotel, under a conductor who called himself Alfredo, in preference to his real name, Alf Gill. Alfredo had a recording contract with a cheap sixpenny label called Edison Bell Winner, and following his vocal debut with "Happy" (May 1927), Allen sang on most of their monthly releases, including such all-time favourites as "My Blue Heaven", "When Day is Done", and a rare duet with the legendary Al Bowlly, "Without a Song".

As was typical of those times, Allen played and recorded with many dance bands of the day. He was one-third of a trio for Harry Bigood and his Broadcasters, singing "I've Got a Feeling I'm Falling", backed up by Eddie Brandt and Phil Arnold (1929). In 1930 he was with Sid Bright, who was the bandleader Geraldo's brother, and his band singing "Little Sunshine".

The year 1931 heard Allen with Tommy Kinsman and his Ciro's Club Band singing "Got a Date with an Angel"; "Lady of Spain I Adore You" with Eddie Grossbart and his Ambassador Club band; and with Jack Leon and his band, "Meet Me Tonight in Dreamland".

Nineteen thirty-two was the big year in Allen's life, when instead of being just a bandleader who now and then puts down his instrument and sings a chorus instead of blowing it, he turned into Britain's favourite crooner. His first big hit was the sultry song "The Sun Has Got His Hat On", recorded with Sydney Lipton and his Grosvenor House Band as a cover to the original version sung by the film star Jack Holt.

There followed a session with the first BBC Dance Orchestra and its original leader, Jack Payne; Allen crooned "Auf Wiedersehen My Dear". Finally came the contract with Henry Hall and the regular daily broadcasts from the BBC, plus the companion contract with Columbia Records. His first side, cut on 26 October 1932, was "Tell Me Tonight", and later came such well-remembered favourites as "Love is the Sweetest Thing"



All songbook given away with the women's weekly *Secrets*, 1935

Photograph: Denis Gifford Collection

singing group, Les Allen and his Canadian Bachelors.

Allen also had a shot at films, singing the theme tune of a 1931 melodrama, *The Reservoir*, featuring Margaret Grahame and Elizabeth Allan, and starring in support of comedian Albert Burdon in the now lost Gainsborough musical comedy, *Heart Wave* (1934). In this his songs included "Felipe", in which he sang "Time to Say Goodnight".

He came back to England in 1954 for a nostalgic reunion with his old bandleader and mentor, Henry Hall. Once again Les Allen sang their old signing-off song, which they had recorded together back in 1934: "It's Time to Say Goodnight".

Denis Gifford

Leslie Allen, singer: born London 29 August 1902; married 1926 (one son); died Toronto 25 June 1996.

turned to Canada in 1947 following his own BBC radio series in which he was billed as "Canada's golden voice of melody".

He came back to England in 1954 for a nostalgic reunion with his old bandleader and mentor, Henry Hall. Once again Les Allen sang their old signing-off song, which they had recorded together back in 1934: "It's Time to Say Goodnight".

He was a rebellious boy who slept in class, and was known as "sleeping Jesus" - the trait persisted; decades later, Mountford teasingly referred to him as "sleeping Peterson" when a

few less than nine impressions of *The Birds of Britain and Europe* were published in the next nine years, and revised and improved editions have been published ever since; it has also been translated into 14 languages. Peterson's pioneer work has been copied and followed by literally hundreds of different field guides covering every facet of natural history.

Peterson was born in upstate New York of a Swedish father and a German mother. He looked at birds from an early age and took his first bird walk on 8 April 1920. He was a rebellious boy who slept in class, and was known as "sleeping Jesus" - the trait persisted; decades later, Mountford teasingly referred to him as "sleeping Peterson" when a

few less than nine impressions of *The Birds of Britain and Europe* were published in the next nine years, and revised and improved editions have been published ever since; it has also been translated into 14 languages. Peterson's pioneer work has been copied and followed by literally hundreds of different field guides covering every facet of natural history.

Peterson studied art at the Student Arts League (1927-28) and the National Academy of Design (1929-31), which he paid for by decorating Chinese lacquer with butterflies, flowers and birds. He went on to teach for a few years before in 1934 becoming the art editor of the Audubon Society, where he remained till 1943.

When I was walking with him through a wood in Buckinghamshire once, a small brown bird flitted furiously through the undergrowth. "Would that be a nightingale, James?" he asked. It was. He had never seen one before, but he recognised it immediately.

He had a somewhat one-

track mind. When he was "birding" nothing distracted him.

The story is told of his arrival in Seville with members of the Mountford expedition on its way to visit the Coto Donana. As the distinguished group of ornithologists, which included Viscount Alanbrooke and Sir Julian Huxley, gazed up in admiration at the great cathedral he was heard to pronounce: "There are lesser kestrels nesting in the roof."

His early wealth - for he soon became the first millionaire author of bird books - bemused him. Staying with his great friend the sea-bird expert James Fisher, with whom he wrote the classic *Wild America* (1955, on the wild areas in the US), he asked Fisher if he should invest the large sums which were beginning to pile up in his bank account. "What are stocks and shares?" he asked. "Should I buy some?"

Throughout his life he devoted himself to matters of conservation and in helping his numerous friends he had made all over the world. When I went to him for help and advice over my hesitant plans to write *The Herons of the World*, he said: "Of course you are best person to write it. You have seen more herons than anybody else, haven't you?" Not only that but he generously wrote the foreword.

He received many honours including the Brewster Medal of the American Ornithologists Union, the Gold Medal of the New York Zoological Society, the Gold Medal of the National Audubon Society, and he was the first American to receive the Gold Medal of the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF).

Roger Peterson supported wildlife and conservation bodies all over the world, and his presence at dedication or fund-raising events ensured that huge crowds would attend.

In October last year he was due to attend the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge, which was thought to be under threat from property developers in Florida, when he suffered a mild stroke.

His will rank with those other two greats of ornithology - John James Audubon and John Gould.

James Hancock

Roger Tory Peterson, ornithologist: born Jamestown, New York 28 August 1908; married 1936 Mildred Washington (marriage dissolved 1942); 1943 Barbara Coulter (two children; marriage dissolved 1976); 1976 Virginia Westervelt; died Old Lyme, Connecticut 28 July 1996.



Jones: 'the perfect partner'

Timothy Fraser Jones, stockbroker: born Liverpool 15 July 1931; staff, Akroyd & Smithers 1957-64; joint chairman 1981-84; director, Mercury International Group 1984-86; Vice Lord-

of-Arms 1986-96; married 1955 Mary Nicolle (one son, two daughters); died London 6 July 1996.

Timothy Jones

The appointment of Brian Peppiatt and Tim Jones in 1981 as joint chairmen of the leading stockbrokers Akroyd & Smithers was warmly welcomed in the City. Such an arrangement could only have worked between individuals of complementary gifts and equal sensitivities. Later, when their merger with S.G. Warburg was in prospect, David Scholey, their chairman and a firm believer in graphology, was advised of Jones's handwriting. "This man will make you the perfect partner." Nothing could have better described him, at work or at home. He had a

unique blend of intuition and sympathy, increased by generosity of spirit.

Jones's mother died when he was very young and his father, to whom he became devoted, when he was 17. After school at Shrewsbury, he did his National Service with the Rifle Brigade, a formative experience on which he looked back with gratitude and pride. By the time he went up to St John's College, Cambridge, in 1951 he seemed unusually mature for his age.

The Cambridge generation of the early 1950s, having grown up in wartime and austerity, were

only too thankful for the better times they had begun to enjoy. They knew that a Third Class degree would guarantee them employment in industry or commerce at around £3000 a year, a living wage for the time. Jones shared in the general confidence which filled the Pitt Club and the Rex Cinema more regularly than the lecture-room. He caught the eye of the father of one of his friends, Ian Macpherson, of the stockbrokers Buckmaster & Moore, and, on going down in 1954, he joined them. In 1955 Jones married May Nicolle, a daughter of Arthur Villeneuve Nicolle, a Jerseyman

whose proudest achievement had been the turn-round in the fortunes of the Sheepbridge Engineering company. In his retirement he taught himself Greek, averring that Thucydides was as great as any that had lived. May had inherited her father's wit and, from her mother, formerly Alice Cobbold, good looks and a more ebullient style. The marriage, which lasted for more than 40 years, was without a blemish of any kind. There were three children, one of whom, David, is himself a stockbroker with S.G. Warburg.

In 1957 Jones moved to

Akroyd & Smithers, where he had caught the eye of another shrewd judge of coming men, Hugh Merriman. He remained there, through the transition from partnership to private then public company and finally the merger with Warburgs, Rowe & Pitman and Mulfrees. With his retirement from the City in 1986, most of the time was spent on the floor of the Stock Exchange, where his acumen, integrity and companionability were prized in equal measure.

In 1964 Jones and his family moved to a Victorian rectory on the Sussex Downs. There

he consolidated his reputation as a host, filling his cellar with wines of such quality that the house became known as "the iceberg", eight-ninths of its value being below the surface. Later, he and his wife turned their attention to the garden, achieving a spectacular effect on chalk. Especially after his retirement, he did good service to his county of East Sussex, becoming High Sheriff in 1987, Deputy Lieutenant and Vice Lord-Lieutenant from 1992.

In appearance Jones was rather below the medium height, with a fine head and

brown eyes. The neatness of his dress, the cut of his suits, the mirror-like quality of his shoes were legendary among his friends. The light-heartedness of his Cambridge days, when he was much in thrall to Sidney Bechet and P.G. Wodehouse, never left him. With noble indifference he shrugged off the illness of his last years.

Martin Nourse

Professor of Applied Statistics: Dr David J. Balding, Ulster Professor of Literary History and Theory: Dr R. Bradford, Professor of Irish History: Dr S.J. Connolly.

Lectures

Victoria and Albert Museum: Richard Dunn, "The Art of the Clock", 2.30pm.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Princess Royal, President, Royal Yachting Association, will sail on board HMY Britannia, Isle of Wight, Palace Edward, Weston-super-Mare, 10-12 August. Prince Charles, Prince of Wales, will sail on board HMY Britannia, Isle of Wight, Palace Edward, Weston-super-Mare, 10-12 August. Prince Charles, Prince of Wales, will sail on board HMY Britannia, Isle of Wight, Palace Edward, Weston-super-Mare, 10-12 August.

DEATHS

FWCETHT: Elias Manos, 79, died suddenly in London on 2 August. Funeral to be announced shortly.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR GAZETTE BIRTHS AND DEATHS (Births, Anniversaries, Deaths, Weddings, Memorials, Obituaries, etc.) should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E1 8TD. Tel: 0171-201 2011 or 0171-201 2012. Fax: 0171-201 2013. OTHER Gazette announcements must be submitted in writing (or faxed) and are charged at £10 a line, VAT extra. Please include a daytime telephone number.

Births, Marriages & Deaths

BIRTHS

Professor Neil Armstrong, the first man on the Moon, 66; Mr. Billy Bunter, football manager, 65; Sir Michael Drury, Professor of General Practice, Birmingham University, 70; Miss Barbara Flynn, actress, 45; Miss Joan Hickson, actress, 90; Lord Hindlip, chairman, Christie, Manson and Woods, 66; Mr Alan Howard, actor, 59; Field Marshal Sir Peter Inge, Chief of the Defence Staff, 61; Mr Richard Jewson, former chairman, Moyer International, 52; Sir Michael Kerr, former Prosecutor General, 73; Sir Bert Milligan, Chairman, the Football Association, 82; Mr John Monk, General Secretary, TUC, 51; Mr Turlough O'Donnell, former Lord of Appeal, Northern Ireland, 72; Mr Rodger Pattison, yachtsman, 53; Mr Keith Pearson, Headmaster, George Heriot's School, Edinburgh, 71.

BIRTHS

Count Johanna von Strunz, physician and politician, 73; Friedrich August Kummer, composer, 1797; Niels Henrik Abel, mathematician, 1802; Alexander William Kinglake, historian and traveller, 1809; Charles-Louis Ambroise Thomas, composer, 1811; Edward George Blaikie, songwriter, 1815; Catherine "Skittles" Walters, courtesan, 1920; Ella Shields (Busby), music-hall artist and male impersonator, 1952; Marilyn Monroe (Norma Jeane Mortenson), film actress, 1962; Richard Burton (Richard Walter Jenkins), actor, 1984. On this day: Sir William Wallace, leader of the Scots captured by the English, 1305; Sir Humphrey Gilbert took possession of Newfoundland for England, 1583; the Federal forces overcame the Confederate navy in the Battle of Mobile Bay, 1864; the Anglo-French Convention declared a British protectorate in Zamboanga and a French protectorate in Madagascar, 1890; the first electrical traffic signals were installed, Cleveland, Ohio, 1914; German forces entered Warsaw, 1915; polygamy was abolished in Turkey,

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Media and leisure should provide plenty of entertainment

Who says August is the slow, silly season when the City shuts down, the pundits shut up and corporate activity grinds to a halt?

This week, there are more major companies releasing figures than you could wave a stick at. Over a dozen blue-chip stocks are set to publish results, making it one of the busiest reporting periods in the financial calendar.

While the banks will again hold the ring, with Abbey National, HSBC, Barclays and Standard Chartered all unwilling to reveal, it is the media and leisure sector which ought to provide the most entertainment.

The highlight of the week should be the Rank Organisation on Thursday. Analysts' pre-tax forecasts for the six months to May are tightly grouped at between £157m-£165m versus £158m last time.

With the figures already well flagged, attention will focus on what will emerge from on

internal strategic review being carried out by new chief executive Andrew Taree.

Broker NatWest describes it as the most important development at the leisure group for many years.

Mr Taree is expected to set out his assessment of those businesses which no longer fit into his longer-term vision for the group. Rank has already announced its intention to sell the holiday operation Shearings and analysts think the disposal programme may be extended to include the holiday camp business Bullins.

The group's commitment to the new Oasis holiday park format may also be scaled back, while the video duplication operations could be off-loaded, leaving Rank to focus on its leisure divisions of bingo, casinos and the Hard Rock Cafeteria.

This morning's interim numbers from Pearson, often considered in the City as another

candidate for a root-and-branch re-think, will be awful.

The main factor behind the estimated halving in profits to around £25m in the six months to June is the continuing problems at Mindscape, the Californian software subsidiary bought for a whopping £131m two years ago.

Losses here are forecast to total £6m, the bulk of which relate to one-off charges and changes to a more conservative accounting policy. But trading also remains poor and Mindscape is unlikely to go back into the black until the second-half of next year at the earliest.

Also depressing Pearson's bottom line is the reduction in income from BSkyB, where management sold its 9.75 per cent direct holding in the satellite broadcaster last September.

The rest of the group should turn in a respectable performance, including a first-time contribution from the educational publishing business

picked up from Harper Collins for £37m earlier this year. A progress report on the sale of Westminster Press, the regional newspaper group

commanding a £300m price tag, may also be delivered.

Half-time at publisher Reed International should be a more upbeat affair. The sale of much of the consumer publishing business a year ago means the turnover figure will be down about 7 per cent with operating profits flat. But a significant cut in the interest bill means pre-tax profits for the six months to June are set to rise by more than 10 per cent to about £410m, driven by across-the-board revenue growth and cost containment.

Best performer is likely to be the professional division, with good growth from US on-line information group Lexis-Nexis.

Shares in the drugs group



STOCK MARKET WEEK

PATRICK TOOHER

Zeneca have been rising steadily into 1997 on the back of good growth prospects for its defence, automobile and the Chem pallet-proofing operations. High hopes are pinned on Westland helicopters, where GKN has a large and well-defined order book.

Poor figures last week from Shell's chemicals activities do not bode well for BP's second-quarter results on Tuesday. But analysts predict better news from BP. Although both operate in ethylene, which has been hit by a slump in prices, BP also has large acrylonitrile and acetic acids businesses which should have fared better.

BP is also less exposed to refining in the Far East, about which Shell made cautious comments. However, UK marketing profits will remain depressed due to the continuing effects of the petrol price war initiated by Esso's "Price Watch" campaign. Analysts

predict net income of about £625m, against £563m in the corresponding second quarter.

Lower second-quarter profits are expected on Friday at the Anglo-Dutch consumer group Unilever, which was linked last week to a possible takeover of Cadbury-Schweppes, the confectionery giant.

Restructuring costs at two newly acquired businesses in North America - the industrial cleaning group Diversey and the shampoo concern Helene Curtis - could run to £100m, pushing pre-tax profits down to around £640m from £655m last time.

Nevertheless, underlying income should show a near 10 per cent improvement, driven by growth in emerging markets, which account for about a quarter of total sales. Investors will also be keen to hear from Niall Fitzgerald about his strategic vision for the group. He takes over from Sir Michael Perry next month.

Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items. Other details: r Ex Rights x Dividend £ At ex u United Securities Market & Suspended pp Partly Paid p Nil Paid Shares + All Stock Source: FT Information

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Interest Rates

	5.75%	5.50%	5.25%	5.00%	4.75%	4.50%
UK	Bank of England	Bank of Scotland	Barclays	Challenger	Co-operative Bank	HSBC
Interest	5.75%	5.50%	5.25%	5.00%	4.75%	4.50%
Discount	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%
US	Bank of America	Bank of New York	Bankers Trust	Bank of America	Bank of America	Bank of America
Interest	5.75%	5.50%	5.25%	5.00%	4.75%	4.50%
Discount	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%

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Inflation fears set Bank on course for clash with Clarke

DIANE COYLE
Economics Editor

The Bank of England's Inflation Report published on Wednesday will set the scene for clashes between Chancellor Kenneth Clarke and Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, in the run-up to a spring general election.

The quarterly report is expected to say that the risk of above-target inflation by mid-1998 could require an increase

in base rates sometime during the next 12 months if the economy continues to build up steam.

In its last report in May, the Bank issued a forthright warning that the economy was at precisely the stage at which "policy mistakes tended to be made in the past". Mr George opposed the subsequent month's quarter-point cut in the level of base rates.

A growing number of independent economists are lining up with the Bank's cautious stance. A clutch of new forecasts

published today predict that the economy is picking up fast enough to put upward pressure on inflation and interest rates.

According to David Mackie, UK economist at the investment bank JP Morgan, "We are in for the sort of mini-boom which is likely to make the Governor very nervous about the inflation target. We could be seeing fireworks by January."

His new report compares the state of the economy with the same point in the Maudling

Barber and Lawson booms. Although the economy has had less stimulus from interest rate cuts in the 1990s, the Government's fiscal policy has been much looser. The parallel suggests the UK is poised for a substantial upturn.

Another investment bank, Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, predicts that unemployment will fall below 7 per cent next year. "The Chancellor believes this is compatible with sustained low inflation - we do not," writes economist James Barty.

Barclays Bank's chief economist, Alan Davies, predicts that base rates will have to climb from their current 5.75 per cent level to 7.5 per cent next year.

"Sustaining low inflation will require cautious policies," he says.

Marian Bell at the Royal Bank of Scotland said yesterday: "There is no reason for the Bank of England to have changed its view since May." Although the short-term prospects for inflation are very favourable, the upturn in manufacturing,

strong retail sales and sterling's decline from its level two months ago would all concern the Bank's economists, she said.

An article to be published in the Bank's Quarterly Bulletin on Wednesday assesses how quickly changes in interest rates affect different sectors of the economy. It confirms that the biggest and fastest reaction occurs in construction and sectors linked to the housing market.

The research found that a fall of just over 1 percentage point

in interest rates would lead to a rise in manufacturing output of nearly 2 per cent after just over two years, with a bigger reaction in construction and related industries.

There is clear evidence that

these parts of the economy are responding to the four reductions in interest rates since December. Today's edition of *Roof Shelter*, the housing magazine, predicts that the housing market is poised for a boom that could need to be dampened, although

probably not before the election.

"Whoever wins the election may well face a housing market working its old inflationary magic," it says.

Mr Barty agrees: "If the market continues to recover with the same momentum the Government will have to act at some time next year." Figures from both Halifax and Nationwide building societies last week confirmed that house prices are climbing at an average annualised rate of 5-10 per cent.

Telephone troubles: Mobile rivals angry over 'delaying tactics' □ Oftel unveils plans for more lines

Cellnet in battle over number portability

CHRIS GODSMARK
Business Correspondent

Cellnet, the mobile telephone network jointly owned by BT and Securicor, has launched a behind-the-scenes campaign to try to prevent the introduction of mobile number portability, where customers can change networks but keep their existing number.

The extent of the lobbying effort was revealed in a letter Cellnet has sent to service providers, the retailers which buy wholesale air time from mobile networks and sell it to the public. Orange, the digital mobile company, is preparing a formal complaint to the industry regulator, Oftel, about what it claims are Cellnet's deliberate delaying tactics.

The introduction of number portability for fixed phone lines is already under way and Oftel is consulting with the industry on how to bring in mobile number portability. The regulator hopes to finalise plans and give a specific time-scale by the end of this year. Supporters of the concept see the lack of number portability as a crucial obstacle to the development of competition.

Cellnet's letter, dated 18 June, says number portability is "being pushed by Orange". It suggests it will be bad for service providers' businesses. It continues: "Cellnet does not appear to have requested comments from service providers,

even though the implications of number portability will have consequences for both your customers and your systems... service providers introducing number portability will need to introduce new business processes as well as modifying billing and administration systems to enable a customer to move networks while taking their number with them."

It concludes with criticism of Oftel: "Given the impact on [service providers'] business of the introduction of number portability will have, we believe Oftel should have asked service providers for their views."

Yesterday Orange attacked the claims made in the letter. Paul Franklin, Orange's director

of regulatory affairs, said: "Cellnet is using whatever tactics it can to delay number portability. It's patently untrue to say it is bad for service providers' business. In fact, it's

quite the reverse, because customers could switch networks without changing their service provider."

The letter, from Richard Davis, Cellnet's head of chan-

nel sales, encloses a copy of the company's response to the Oftel consultation paper. In the document Cellnet argues customers are not interested in keeping their mobile number when changing network: "Customers in general do not perceive their mobile numbers to be of particular value." It concludes: "The benefits of mobile portability would not outweigh the cost of implementation."

Cellnet has 41 per cent of the total mobile phone market but has slipped behind Vodafone and Orange in the fast expanding digital business. The Government has said all analogue phone customers should move to digital by 2005. By June this year Vodafone had grabbed 32 per cent of the digital mobile market with 26 per cent for Orange and Cellnet trailing on 22 per cent. Analysts have pointed to risks for both Cellnet and Mercury One-2-One, which has 20 per cent of the digital market, if they fall behind the two front-runners in the digital revolution.

A spokesman for Cellnet was unavailable for comment yesterday.

Phone users face another upheaval

Oftel, the telecommunications industry regulator, will today unveil plans for yet another numbering upheaval to meet the apparently insatiable British demand for phone lines, writes Chris Godsmark.

As with phONE day last year, when a "1" was added to every area dialling code, today's announcement could cost businesses hundreds of millions of pounds and herald another boom for sign writers and stationery printers.

phONE day added a possible

8 billion new numbers, but five cities - Greater London, Belfast, Cardiff, Portsmouth and Southampton - will still run out of numbers by the end of the century. This is the second set of proposals by Oftel to satisfy this demand. Last year's consultation paper met with a less than enthusiastic response from the industry and consumer groups.

Oftel's previous idea was to divide the country into 10 regions, which would use the prefix "02". These numbers would run in parallel with existing "01" num-

bers. The change would have provided another 800 million potential numbers, but if a friend or neighbour had the new code, a caller with the old one would have to dial the whole area code to make a local call.

The problem is that the present system, devised by the GPO in the 1950s, is inefficient. It divides the country into 638 roughly equal geographical areas, but generally only 40 per cent of potential numbers can be used.

Demand for phone lines has exploded in recent years with new

phone companies bidding aggressively for customers. The move from company switchboards to direct lines and the growing appetite for home fax and modern lines has made matters worse. New phone operators are also allocated space numbers in blocks of 10,000, regardless of whether they need them all.

The changes must take place over the next four years. But as with phONE day, which cost BT £100m, the two systems will run side by side to prevent undue confusion.

Terms of shop leases hold up sale of Signet chains

NIGEL COPE

The sale of Signet's UK jewellery chains H Samuel and Ernest Jones has been held up by negotiations over the 600 shop leases. There are 430 branches of H Samuel and almost 170 Ernest Jones shops with the leases controlled by 162 different landlords.

Protracted negotiations over the lease terms have delayed the sale of the two groups, which are expected to be acquired by Apax Partners, the UK venture capital company, in a £280m deal. The sale is still expected to go through and could be completed this week.

"It's a nightmare. It's a wall of complicated property issues," one source close to the negotiations said.

Though Signet has never revealed details regarding the sale of its two UK businesses, it is understood that Apax has

been the only potential buyer for several months.

Signet put the UK jewellery businesses up for sale in January in an attempt to reduce its hefty debts of around £350m, as well as to appease rebel shareholders. At the time, several groups expressed an interest in the shops, including the former chairman Gerald Ratner.

Ratner is unlikely to retain ownership of both chains. One possibility is that it would also buy Goldsmiths, the rival jewellery chain, but with a London head office and stock market quote. Signet would become the second-largest jewellery retailer in the US, with profits of £60m on sales of almost £500m from its Sterling chain last year.

Signet's position has been helped by strong recent trading by its core chains. In April, chairman James McAdam said like-for-like sales in the first 10 weeks of the current financial year were 6 per cent ahead of the same period in 1995. Ernest Jones was the best performer with a sales increase of 24 per cent. H Samuel was up 1 per cent. Sales at the American business were 5 per cent higher.

capital reconstruction. The former Ratner's business had net debt of £308m at the year-end in February. It also owes £135m to preference shareholders in unpaid dividends.

The sale would leave Signet with only Sterling, its US jewellery chain, but with a London head office and stock market quote. Signet would become the second-largest jewellery retailer in the US, with profits of £60m on sales of almost £500m from its Sterling chain last year.

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Auction of BBC transmission services aims to raise £250m

MATHEW HORSMAN
Media Editor

The BBC will this week finalise plans for the privatisation of its transmission services, prior to an auction aimed at raising as much as £250m.

An information sales memorandum has been produced and will be sent to potential buyers as early as tomorrow. According to informed sources, it details which of the corporation's extensive transmission-related facilities will be available for sale.

These are thought to include the main transmitters as well as back-up facilities and satellite uplinks. However, a large-scale telecoms operation, including broadband links between BBC offices in London and the North, may not be part of the sale.

The privatisation is expected to generate considerable interest in the broadcasting and facilities market in the UK.

Among likely bidders are Racal, the telecommunications, defence and electronics giant, and International Cable-Tel, the US-owned cable operator that earlier this year bought NTL, the country's leading private-sector transmission company. There is also the prospect of a management buyout, with venture capital backing. Other possible buyers are BT Carlton Communications and Pearson, which are already involved to varying degrees in the transmission business.

The sale marks the first time that a part of the massive BBC infrastructure has been sold to the private sector. The corporation agreed to the privatisation in order to concentrate its attention on programme making and the introduction of digital services. The BBC will be entitled to keep most of the proceeds from the sale to finance the introduction of new technology.

The auction is being handled by Lehman Brothers, who have advised the BBC on the valuation. Initial expectations of about £180m have been revised upward to at least £250m, following the sale of NTL. That deal created what Lehman has argued is a new benchmark.

The BBC recently launched a radical management restructuring, upgrading the role of the chief executive of BBC Resources, Rod Lynch, whose section handles the transmission services.

The shake-up was aimed at improving efficiency and extending the corporation's global commercial operations, as an addition to core funding through the licence fee.

The restructuring led some to predict the eventual privatisation of the whole of the BBC, and the end of the licence fee. But John Birt, director general, has insisted the plans are to safeguard future of the BBC as a public service broadcaster.

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Index	Date	Prev's Clsg	Change(\$)	1996 High	1996 Low	Total(\$)	Yr Ago	1995 High	1995 Low
FTSE 100	3770.60	+97.3	+2.6	3857.10	3632.30	4.07			
FTSE 250	4265.70	+50.2	+1.2	4568.80	4015.20	3.54			
FTSE 350	1895.00	+43.1	+2.3	1945.40	1816.60	3.95			
FT Small Cap	2094.10	-3.0	-0.1	2244.36	1954.06	3.16			
FT All Share	1863.56	+39.5	+2.2	1924.17	1791.92	3.69			
New York*	5579.82	+205.8	+3.8	5778.00	5032.94	2.21			
Tokyo	20240.41	-181.5	-0.9	2266.80	19724.70	0.751			
Hong Kong	10861.97	+258.4	+2.4	11594.99	10204.87	3.477			
Frankfurt	2508.65	+38.3	+1.6	2583.49	2253.36	1.841			

